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**BUILDING A COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE SYSTEM: A COMPARATIVE CASE ANALYSIS**

by

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# BUILDING A COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE SYSTEM: A COMPARATIVE CASE ANALYSIS

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# ABSTRACT

Governance processes in the public sector establish policies and institutionalize procedures for how organizations work together. Developing and sustaining these governance processes may be difficult. Efforts to develop a regional wireless interoperable communications network in the Phoenix metropolitan area resulted in a series of successes and failures. This thesis uses a classic case study framework to examine the governance development process from 1999 to 2015 among the City of Phoenix, City of Mesa and additional parties. Three distinct phases in the governance development process were identified and used to conduct a comparative analysis. Seven executives involved in the process were interviewed to provide insight and experience related to the governance development process across the three phases. The comparative case analysis illustrates factors that contributed to the success and failure of the network's governance. Recommendations are provided that other agencies may employ in their own governance development to accelerate the process or avoid potential pitfalls and achieve successful outcomes more quickly. While the case study focuses on the establishment of an interoperable communications system, the principles and examples may apply to other technology or homeland security efforts to establish formal cross-jurisdictional governance structures.

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# LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| COPS | Community Oriented Policing Services |
| DHS | Department of Homeland Security |
| DOJ | Department of Justice |
| HSGP | Homeland Security Grant Program |
| ICC | Inter-Organizational Collaborative Capacity |
| IRB | Institutional Review Board |
| LCAF | Levels of Collaborative Action Framework |
| NECP | National Emergency Communications Plan |
| NPS | Naval Postgraduate School |
| OEC | Office of Emergency Communications |
| PII | personally identifying information |
| RWC | Regional Wireless Cooperative (Phoenix) |
| SSPO | structure, strategy, process, and outcomes |
| TKI | Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument |
| TOPAZ | Trunked Open Arizona Network (Mesa) |
| TRWC | TOPAZ Regional Wireless Cooperative |

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Ashlyn (5) entertained while I studied and completed a thesis. I love you both. Words cannot express enough how much your love and support has meant to me during this course of study.

# I. INTRODUCTION

Natural disasters, human-caused incidents, pre-planned events, financial motivations, and other triggers have caused the movement towards collaborative governance systems to strengthen homeland security. The events that occurred on September 11, 2001 profoundly impacted public safety operations in the United States. Given the magnitude of the attacks on the domestic home front, first responders across the nation must now frequently engage in increasingly complex emergency response efforts. Incident commanders are required to quickly identify, request, and direct a myriad of resources while managing response and recovery efforts.

In *Bak's Sand Pile, Strategies for a Catastrophic World*, Professor Ted Lewis of Naval Postgraduate School stated that, "Terrorism, hurricanes, oil spills, electrical blackouts, transportation system collapses, and political and social upheaval all threaten modern society…It seems as though the challenges are getting bigger as well as more frequent, across many disciplines."[1] Effective incident response requires command, control, technology, communications, and intelligence. Pre-planned events such as national sports games, large-scale protests, and events with a significant number of participants also have similar requirements.

Each of these modern day threats, whether they be routine or crisis, has the need for effective interoperable communications for incident management. Response agencies consisting of law enforcement entities, fire departments, emergency medical system providers, emergency management organizations, hospitals, and non-governmental organizations at the federal, state, county, tribal, and local levels must now work in a collaborative manner to achieve effective results. The ability to communicate and coordinate is critical to the successful response of these organizations.

[1] Ted G. Lewis, *Bak's Sand Pile: Strategies for a Catastrophic World* (Williams, CA: Agile Press, 2011), 9.

In the Phoenix urban area, public safety agencies have successfully collaborated with one another on numerous projects and programs to enhance public safety. This approach has worked for three National Football League Super Bowl Games, Major League Baseball and National Basketball Association all-star games, multiple annual marathons and triathlons, professional golf tournaments, and biannual major motor sport races.

The Phoenix urban area encompasses approximately 9,220 square miles and includes 23 incorporated cities and towns, with a combined population of approximately 4 million people.[2] The Phoenix urban area contains the nation's largest nuclear power facility, the state's largest university, fuel storage for 84 percent of Arizona, and Sky Harbor International Airport, which is one of the nation's top ten busiest airports.[3] Due to its geographic size, population density, and significant infrastructure in the urban area, collaboration for response efforts is a daily occurrence for pre-planned, routine, or unexpected incidents. As larger-scale incidents occur, the need for shared communications is even more critical.

In addition to events occurring at the state and local level, national events also trigger efforts to increase collaboration. The *Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States* described how a deficiency of coordination and interoperable communications contributed to a lack of information sharing on scene among the first responders at the World Trade Center.[4] Due to the use of disparate communication networks, the effective sharing of information did not occur among the command and control personnel on the scene, leading to increased first responder fatalities. The Phoenix urban area was already in the midst of developing a regional communications system when 9/11 occurred, but the National Commission

[2] "Maricopa County QuickFacts from the U.S. Census Bureau," United States Census, last modified December 4, 2014, http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/04/04013.html.

[3] "Airport Facts," Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, accessed December 31, 2014, https://skyharbor.com/about/airportFacts.html.

[4] National Commission on Terrorist Attacks, *The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States*, authorized edition (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2004), 297–300, 397.

findings further progress by encouraging jurisdictions to work together to develop an interoperable communications network for the Phoenix urban area.

## A. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Collaborative governance systems are often difficult to develop and sustain. The United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) considers collaboration between regional partners critical for success. Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) guidance, the National Response Plan, the National Preparedness Guidelines, and other governmental publications reiterate the need for collaboration to occur. Research, however, is lacking on real-world efforts in the homeland security environment.

Since the mid-1970s, communities in the Phoenix urban area have collaborated to develop numerous programs that provide higher levels of service and reduced costs for local residents. In the late 1990s, two of the largest jurisdictions in the region agreed to design, build, and operate a regional communications system. The City of Phoenix and the City of Mesa worked together to begin the process of building a valley-wide interoperable communications network.

Other jurisdictions in the region were queried to determine their interest in joining the development of this system. The late 1990s saw little emphasis on developing joint communications systems, and few partnerships to share wireless communications networks existed. While other partnerships covered governmental operations such as transit, waste water treatment, and fire/emergency medical services, jurisdictions in the region traditionally designed, built, maintained, and operated their own wireless networks to support individual agency needs.

At the time that Phoenix and Mesa began construction on a shared communications network, all other jurisdictions opted to remain independent. This allowed Phoenix and Mesa to proceed with a bilateral relationship. The two cities never formalized their relationship, however. Instead, the two bodies

operated on nothing more than a verbal 'handshake' agreement. The communications network became operational in 2003. Upon initial implementation, the informal structure allowed both bodies to govern and operate their respective parts of the system, which provided necessary communications across the Metropolitan Phoenix area. Relationships were established and the joined networks effectively operated for several years without a formalized governance structure in place.

Following the events on 9/11, the United States federal government encouraged regions to collaborate in building regional wireless networks. This effort not only sought to improve response and interoperability, but also allowed for the sharing of costs, personnel, and equipment. Homeland security funding programs continuously incentivized the need to collaborate on projects to allow federal grant funding to benefit multiple agencies in a given region. In the following years, Phoenix and Mesa continued to grow and operate their joint communications network.

In 2005, a United States Department of Justice (DOJ) Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) grant allowed the City of Tempe to join the network.[5] Tempe's addition to the network began an effort by the original two participants to formalize the governance structure as additional members joined the network. The two entities embarked on a governance development process because of the changing conditions with other jurisdictions now interested in joining the partnership. As Tempe prepared to join the network, two municipal working groups sought to develop a unified governance structure in preparation for adding an additional member to the consortium. These groups comprised technical staff, operational personnel, department heads, and policy makers.

As the governance development process progressed, several critical factors emerged that became contentious during the negotiations: administrative control, power, trust, risk mitigation, and fiscal management. Eventually, the

[5] City of Tempe, "Staff Summary Report," December 13, 2007, http://ww2.tempe.gov/publicbodies/Docs/Council/SupportingDocuments/20071213ITDH1.pdf.

discussions became extremely antagonistic over some of the critical factors. This led to an impasse in the governance negotiations and resulted in the establishment of two distinct wireless networks. Phoenix and Tempe opted to form a cooperative and Mesa, along with several other partners, established its own organization. Thus, two entities began operating within the same region and competing for resources, funding, and members. This separation directly affected the first responders, who now had to manage operations on two separate systems while jointly responding to incidents.[6] Ultimately, this reduced collaborative capacity in the region and led to strained relationships within the public safety community.

With the separation of the networks, both entities continued to develop their own independent governance structures. While the two organizations continued to evolve and add additional members, a renewed emphasis on developing a comprehensive governance process began in 2012. Partnerships were reestablished and both parties once again initiated discussions on how to unify the disparate systems to improve operational capabilities and share resources within the region. The current governance development process has been successful, with parties agreeing to compromise and collaborate to achieve the vision of a single regional wireless communications network in the Phoenix urban area.

This research project examines three phases of collaborative effort to develop a governance structure:

- 1999–2004 – Informal Governance Operations (Successful)
- 2004–2008 – Formalized Governance Development (Unsuccessful)
- 2008–Current – Formalized Governance Development (Successful)

The initial phase between Phoenix and Mesa encompassed a time from approximately 1999–2004 where an informal relationship operated successfully. The second phase, 2004–2012, saw formalized governance discussions break

[6] Gary Nelson, "Radio Woes Vex Phoenix-Area Firefighters," *Azcentral.com*, accessed December 31, 2014, http://www.azcentral.com/community/mesa/articles/20130312phoenix-firefighters-radio-woes.html.

down after a third party joined. Finally, the last phase comprises 2012 to current discussions, where formalized collaborative governance is being successfully established by the multiple parties engaged in the process. Each phase has unique characteristics that make it successful or unsuccessful.

The case study offered here assesses what concepts of governance, negotiation, conflict management, collaboration, and strategic vision may help the homeland security community identify the challenges and success of establishing collaborative governance systems. The findings may be applied to future endeavors to potentially avoid situations of a similar nature. Successful analysis of the dynamic role of conflict in the negotiation and collaboration process will provide guidance for other regions in the nation seeking to establish their own governance processes. The role of creating strategic vision also is examined. While the case study focuses on the establishment of an interoperable communications system, the principles and examples may apply to other technology or homeland security efforts to establish formal cross-jurisdictional governance structures.

## B. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Over the past 16 years, the communications collaboration in the metropolitan Phoenix area has experienced a series of successes and failures. Using conflict management, negotiation, and collaborative frameworks, this thesis explores the efforts between the Mesa Trunked Open Arizona Network (TOPAZ) and Phoenix Regional Wireless Cooperative (RWC). In order to analyze the specific homeland security problem space of interoperable communications and developing collaborative governance systems, the following research questions will be answered:

- What motivated the shift from an informal governance system to a bureaucratic/institutionalized governance structure?
- What are the enablers and barriers to effective collaboration in this case?
- How did the collaborative process evolve over time and what was the impact?

- How can future collaborative efforts use the case findings to build governance development approaches to foster sustainment and build further collaborative capacity?

## C. RESEARCH STRATEGY

This research uses a classic case study framework that evaluates three distinct time periods in the governance development process. Semi-structured qualitative interviews with seven participants involved in the various phases of the evolution of the governance development process were conducted to provide data for analysis. The interviews allowed participants with critical involvement in the process to describe why issues occurred and how the process evolved over time. Evaluation and action research is employed to discover how governance processes evolved over time through the three distinct phases of the process. Each phase is used for comparative analysis in a case study framework. Other sources of data include the following: the personal experiences of the author of this thesis, official reports and records, news stories, and governance documents.

## D. SIGNIFICANCE OF THESIS RESEARCH

In 2008, the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Emergency Communications released the National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP). Upon release, the Secretary of Homeland Security, Michael Chertoff, stated the explicit need for jurisdictions across the nation to focus on technology, coordination, governance, planning, usage, training and exercises at all levels of government.[7] This effort responded to a Congressional directive for DHS to create a national plan.[8] The aspects of achieving interoperable communications are outlined in the plan and include the establishment of an effective governance process and structure. The ultimate goal is to achieve the vision of interoperable communications in the homeland security community: "Emergency responders

[7] United States Department of Homeland Security, "National Emergency Communications Plan," July 2008: Message from the Secretary.

[8] Ibid.

can communicate—as needed, on demand, and as authorized; at all levels of government; and across all disciplines."[9]

Plans and documentation from federal entities contain similar language on the need to collaborate and develop governance processes to manage the homeland security response.[10] While the guidance provides high-level recommendations, however, examples of how actual agencies have developed collaborative governance processes is lacking.

While this thesis specifically analyzes the issue of governance development with an interoperable communications network, the principles and recommendations may be applied to other collaborative efforts in the homeland security realm. No two agencies are alike. As other agencies use these findings to understand the issues encountered in this case study and employ some of the applicable recommendations, however, it is anticipated this may benefit other agencies by accelerating their governance development process by avoiding some of the difficulties explored in this case.

## E. LIMITATION OF THIS THESIS STUDY

All research has some limitations. Responsible research methods should make the reader aware of these limitations. Case studies have many advantages in the social sciences: the ability to use several sources of data to bear on research questions, the ability to use historical data to develop timelines and context, and the ability to be flexible with data acquisition and analysis.[11] The case study method is also a method of choice when the subject of study is not

[9] United States Department of Homeland Security, "National Emergency Communications Plan."

[10] Tammy A. Rinehart, Anna T. Laszlo, and Gwen O. Briscoe, *Collaboration Toolkit: How to Build, Fix, and Sustain Productive Partnerships* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2001).

[11] Herbert J. Rubin and Irene S. Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2011), 148.

readily distinguishable from its context.[12] Using a case study approach, however, may limit the generalizability of findings to other contexts.

Additionally, much of this data will require a retrospective analysis by the participants, which may limit the reliability of the data. In order to mitigate this factor, multiple individuals involved in the process were interviewed for their perspectives to increase the reliability of the data. Participants were selected from multiple jurisdictions and different perspectives to reduce the bias and provide various points of view to increase confidence in the results. The author of this research was engaged in the governance development process to a limited extent. Since the author participated in the process, there is an element of research bias that will be accounted for. The author limited data input to specific historic details that may not have been mentioned by interviewees since they were aware of the author's background. The author did not insert personal interpretations of processes in the phases of the governance development process, relying instead on statements from the interviewees to mitigate researcher bias.

## F. STRUCTURE OF THIS THESIS

Chapter II reviews current literature describing various models of collaborative governance efforts to explore how models used in other contexts may be applied to the problem space of interoperable communications systems. Specific literature related to negotiation, conflict, collaboration, and strategic vision are presented to describe the common factors across all disciplines that are applicable to this research effort. Chapter II also covers some federal initiatives as they relate to the establishment of governance structures in the homeland security community.

Chapter III presents the design and conduct of the research. Executive-level participants involved in the governance development process through the

[12] Robert K. Yin, *Applications of Case Study Research*, 2nd ed., Applied Social Research Methods Series (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2003), 4.

three phases of the process participated in one-on-one interviews. Participants answered a series of open-ended questions to provide feedback on their experiences and perspectives on the issues at each of the phases of the governance development process.

Chapter IV presents the data and analysis of the participant interviews. Upon completion of the interviews, the audio files were transcribed for analysis and to capture verbatim comments. Systematic qualitative analysis techniques were used to examine the interview data. The transcribed data were coded to identify common concepts, themes, events, examples, and topical markers.[13] The data were then evaluated for comparative case study analysis across the three phases of the governance development process.

Chapter V presents the conclusions and recommendations. This chapter summarizes the interview results, draws conclusions based on the data analysis, and provides recommendations based on the findings along with suggestions for further research efforts.

[13] Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 192.

# II. LITERATURE REVIEW

## A. BACKGROUND

The study on inter-organizational collaboration and governance partnerships in the private and public sector is extensive. The field of homeland security, however, is still in the early stages of becoming an academic discipline and, therefore, specific literature related to the impact of the factors contributing to building collaborative governance processes in homeland security is limited. This review is an analysis of relevant literature regarding aspects of governance, negotiation, conflict, collaboration, and strategic vision.

## B. GOVERNANCE

Governance is defined as "the means for achieving direction, control, and coordination of individuals and organizations with varying degrees of autonomy in order to advance joint objectives."[14] The role of governance in the public sector is to develop policies, institutionalize processes, and build relationships in furtherance of an objective. Understanding the dynamic nature of governance is important to developing a comprehensive collaborative governance process. Studies of governance partnerships provide models for interpreting success factors for governance development.

Imperial examined six watershed management programs. Imperial and Kauneckis analyzed the movement from conflict to collaboration while studying the governance process in the Lake Tahoe region from 1959 until the early 2000s. The study provides a comparative cross-case analysis to examine how collaboration is used to enhance governance networks. This model conceptualizes the different collaborative activities and their relationships and allows for a multilevel analysis of governance networks. This model is called the

[14] Mark T. Imperial and Derek Kauneckis, "Moving from Conflict to Collaboration: Watershed Governance in Lake Tahoe," *Natural Resources Journal* 43, no. 4 (Fall 2003): 1011.

Levels of Collaborative Action Framework (LCAF).[15] In his research, Imperial provided a conceptual framework that encourages practitioners to address problems holistically rather than functioning along traditional programmatic boundaries.[16] Specifically, he categorized his findings into three levels of joint action: operational, policy-making, and institutional.[17]

The operational level is where organizations take action within the structures or rules created (or not created) by policy makers. Organizations often operate at this level since it is difficult or impossible to accomplish a task without collaborating. Additionally, greater public value is often generated through joint action versus operating independently.[18] Operational processes typically focus on some form of service delivery. Processes at the operational level may be inherently temporary or ad hoc, whereas others may be designed to endure over time.[19] Operational collaboration is typically characterized by limited established policy, but has a focus on taking action to accomplish a task or objective. The operational level also does not focus on the development or creation of policy; rather, the focus is entirely on accomplishing an objective.

The policy-making level is characterized by activities that occur as a steering function to improve communications among actors, coordinate actions, and integrate policies in ways that advance collective goals.[20] Policy making often does not have a direct impact on real-world operations. Rather, individual or collective policy-making activities determine, enforce, continue, promote,

[15] Mark T. Imperial, "Using Collaboration as a Governance Strategy: Lessons from Six Watershed Management Programs," *Administration & Society* 37, no. 3 (July 2005): 288.

[16] Ibid., 283.

[17] Ibid., 288–289.

[18] Ibid., 289.

[19] Ibid., 290.

[20] B. Guy Peters and John Pierre, "Governance without Government? Rethinking Public Administration," *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 8, no. 2 (1998): 223–43.

enhance, constrain, or alter actions at the operational level.[21] Additionally, policy making includes collaborative activities such as the creation of work groups, task forces, advisory committees, and other formal or informal processes that are important because they help members find new ways to work together.[22] These activities are designed to share knowledge, share resources, solve problems, build relationships, and develop trust.[23] At this level, the concept of shared vision is also critical to successful collaboration. Vision is a function to allow disparate groups to resolve disagreements and is a powerful motivator to accomplish successful governance and work together long-term.[24]

Institutional-level collaborations are activities that "influence, constrain, enhance, or promote actions at the operational and policy-making levels."[25] This level seeks ways to institutionalize shared policies and norms. A common technique is the formalizing of a memorandum of understanding or intergovernmental agreement.[26] Finding ways to institutionalize policies is critical to ensuring that operational activities are carried out.[27] The formalization process at the institutional level also establishes formal governing rules, decision-making processes, parameters for action, and conflict resolution mechanisms.[28] The collaborative organizations also become less reliant on individuals and personal relationships, which improves resiliency and sustainability of the governance mechanism.[29] Understanding the three levels of collaboration as a governance strategy evolves allows for the analysis of the governance development

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[21] Larry L. Kiser and Elinor Ostrom, "The Three Worlds of Action: A Metatheoretical Synthesis of Institutional Approaches," in *Strategies of Political Inquiry*, ed. Elinor Ostrom, vol. 48, Sage Focus Editions (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1982), 179–222.

[22] Imperial, "Using Collaboration as a Governance Strategy," 296.

[23] Ibid., 296.

[24] Ibid., 298.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid., 299.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid., 302.

[29] Ibid.

processes. This also ensures that the appropriate stakeholders are involved in the process to create collaborative organizations.

Public managers are tasked with improving operations and creating partnerships to increase public value by having agencies work together, rather than separately.[30] A challenge is to find methods to improve governance when the capacity for solving problems is dispersed across many agencies and when few organizations can accomplish their mission by acting alone.[31] According to Imperial, this process is "inherently political and involves bargaining, negotiation, and compromise."[32] Bardach also noted that it is common to find that collaborative efforts at one level lead directly, or indirectly, to activities at other levels, which gives these processes an evolutionary and emergent character.[33]

Using the three-level framework, this study provides insight to the governance process that enables statutes, resources, programmatic structures, social norms, and other relationships between organizations to evolve over time.[34] This article is particularly relevant because it documents the early periods of conflict and resulting negotiation techniques used to eventually lead to a collaborative governance structure. Work across these three levels—operational, policy-making and institutional—inevitably surfaces conflict among various organizational stakeholders. This study also demonstrates the evolution of conflict to collaboration in the process.

Imperial and Kauneckis built on Bardach's theory of emergence in the governance process, noting that new relationships develop based on trust, mutual understanding, and understanding that cooperation could be pursued in

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[30] Eugene Bardach, *Getting Agencies to Work Together: The Practice and Theory of Managerial Craftsmanship* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1998), 17.

[31] Imperial, "Using Collaboration as a Governance Strategy," 282.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Eugene Bardach, "Developmental Dynamics: Interagency Collaboration as an Emergent Phenomenon," *Journal of Public Administration Research & Theory* 11, no. 2 (April 2001): 155–157.

[34] Imperial and Kauneckis, "Moving from Conflict to Collaboration," 1011.

some areas, while disagreement remained in others.[35] Additionally, they found that the role of leadership was an important factor with the emergence of successful governance processes. The leadership roles of senior individuals who demonstrated a willingness to negotiate and shift away from previous positions were also examined as success factors in the study.[36]

These authors also found that collaboration increased when organizations moved away from zero-sum processes to win-win situations.[37] When process is moved to the policy-making or institutional levels, a broader range of interests are possible than at the operational level. Accordingly, collaboration can focus more on win-win or at least win-no-lose situations.[38] These situations are not optimal for either party; neither side wins or loses. The result is compromise. Collaboration also tends to be a trial and error process "in which the outcomes of one effort such as trust become precursors for subsequent cooperative efforts."[39]

Imperial and Kauneckis reveal the importance of trust and relationships in the governance process. Early collaborative governance efforts often exhibit a limited amount of trust and weaker relationships. Once relationships and trust have developed, however, there is a deliberate effort made to maintain that social capital.[40] Their longitudinal study indicated that while there is no single formula for developing trust and relationships, an important component of the process is frequent and repeated interactions to foster trust.[41][42]

In summary, research shows that governance is a collaborative process that works when efforts highlight common interests and build on trust and

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[35] Imperial and Kauneckis, "Moving from Conflict to Collaboration," 1041.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid., 1033.

[38] Ibid., 1048.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid., 1051.

[41] Ibid.

[42] See generally Robert Axelrod, The Evolution of Cooperation (1984)

relationships that develop through interaction and shared vision.[43] Governance develops over time as a series of agreements upon certain aspects of maintaining a cooperative relationship, along with a willingness to disagree on others. Healthy discourse is often beneficial to stimulating policy change and agreement.[44] The discourse among participants may create conflict in the governance development process, but it also creates opportunities for organizations to work together in ways that improve service delivery and in this problem space to increase interoperable communications capabilities.

## C. NEGOTIATION

As organizations develop and evolve, they often knowingly or unknowingly engage in various types of negotiation in the course of establishing collective partnerships. Negotiation "is a process by which two or more parties attempt to resolve their opposing interests."[45] Business examples are abundant in literature to explain the nuances of successful and unsuccessful negotiation techniques. Often, these interactions relate to cost/benefit analysis and typically revolve around finances or control. In the negotiation process, partners often strive for efficiency and equity as overarching factors to a successful venture.[46] Other aspects of negotiation include collaboration, bargaining, and power play.[47]

These concepts are not unlike challenges facing the homeland security community as partnerships are forged and collaborative or joint systems established. The role of trust and acceptance of risk makes the process of negotiation just as critical for homeland security coalitions as those in business or

[43] Imperial and Kauneckis, "Moving from Conflict to Collaboration," 1053.

[44] Ibid., 1054.

[45] Roy Lewicki et al., *Negotiation*, 6th ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill/Irwin, 2009), 6.

[46] Africa Ariño and José de la Torre, "Learning from Failure: Towards an Evolutionary Model of Collaborative Ventures," *Organization Science* 9, no. 3 (May 1, 1998): 307.

[47] C. Brooklyn Derr, "Managing Organizational Conflict: Collaboration, Bargaining, and Power Approaches," *California Management Review* (pre-1986) 21, no. 2 (Winter 1978): 77.

other public sector organizations.[48] The literature reveals many case studies of failed and successful negotiation strategies in the public and private sector that may relate to homeland security. While not specific to governance in the interoperable communications field, these concepts provide frameworks for analysis of the activities taking place within the problem space examined in this thesis.

Research indicates there are a series of strategies available for addressing a negotiation situation. Fisher, Ury, and Patton provided an analysis of successful negotiation strategies that focus on addressing problems, not positions.[49] They described a method of principled negotiation developed at the Harvard Negotiation Project that decides issues based on merits, rather than through a haggling process on what each side says it will and will not do.[50] One of their suggestions is to separate people from the problem and focus on interests and not positions.[51] When entities involved in a negotiation situation take positions, they begin to endanger the ongoing relationship in addition to not compromising and reaching consensus.

There are two kinds of interests: substantive and relationship.[52] Substantive interests are those in which the parties' relationship tends to become entangled with their discussions on substantive issues.[53] On both ends of the negotiation, people and problems are likely to be treated as one. This may lead to anger over the situation, which is likely to be construed as a personal attack rather than disagreement over the problem.[54] Participants are also likely to draw

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[48] Bart Nooteboom, Hans Berger, and Niels G. Noorderhaven, "Effects of Trust and Governance on Relational Risk," *Academy of Management Journal* 40, no. 2 (April 1997): 308–338.

[49] Roger Fisher et al., *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*, revised edition (New York: Penguin Books, 2011), 4.

[50] Ibid., xii.

[51] Ibid., 41.

[52] Ibid., 20.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Ibid.

on unfounded inferences, which they then treat as facts about intentions and attitudes.[55]

Relationship interests are those that focus on maintaining the positive relationship between the parties and separate people from the issue.[56] A negotiation as a contest of will over positions aggravates the process.[57] A focus on maintaining a relationship allows for both parties to feel valued in the process and seeks to separate the relationship from the substance and deal directly with the problem.[58] Another important aspect to relationship interests is to not neglect one's own issues with anger and frustration in order to keep the relationship harmonious.[59]

When parties involved discuss each other's perceptions, they are better able to focus on interests and not positions to reach consensus. Additionally, an approach of looking forward and not back is a key success tactic in a negotiation process.[60] When attacks on a particular position occur, there is a tendency to attack the person and not the problem. Fisher, Ury, and Patton described the need to not attack a position, but rather look behind the position to determine the nature of their position to successfully address underlying interests represented by that position.[61] Additionally, create options for mutual gain and insist on objective criteria to reach compromise.[62] Objective criteria is a series of principles to which both parties can agree and negotiate in an honest and straightforward manner.[63]

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[55] Fisher et al., *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*, 20.

[56] Ibid., 20–21.

[57] Ibid., 21.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Ibid., 22.

[60] Ibid., 53.

[61] Ibid., 114.

[62] Ibid., 136–137.

[63] Ibid., 131–132.

Lewicki, Saunders, and Barry provided six characteristics of a negotiation situation. These include the involvement of two or more parties, a conflict or dispute that needs attention, parties negotiating by choice, an expectation of a give-and-take process, parties searching for agreement rather than conflict, and the management of tangibles.[64] One key characteristic is that the parties need each other to achieve their preferred objectives or outcomes. Alternatively, they choose to work together because the possible outcome is better than they can achieve working on their own.[65]

In complex negotiations, both distributive and integrative bargaining may occur. In a distributive bargaining situation, the parties accept the fact that there can only be one winner given the situation, and they pursue a course of action to be that winner.[66] Integrative bargaining attempts to find solutions so both parties can do well and achieve their goals.[67] As intergroup conflict occurs between organizations, negotiations at the organizational level can be the most complex. The need to emphasize commonalities between parties and minimize differences is critical to being able to successfully manage a compromise.[68] Commonalities, or agreements on principle, can also be used to take an integrative approach to complex negotiations that also include distributive aspects. This facilitates an overall collaborative rather than competitive interaction.[69]

The creation of a coalition is also important to moving a process forward. A coalition is a collection of two or more parties within a larger social setting who work together to pursue mutually desirable goals.[70] Additionally, a winning

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[64] Lewicki et al., *Negotiation*, 6–9.

[65] Ibid., 9.

[66] Ibid., 15.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Ibid., 74.

[69] Ibid., 79.

[70] Xiaojia Guo and John Lim, "Negotiation Support Systems and Team Negotiations: The Coalition Formation Perspective," *Information & Software Technology* 49, no. 11/12 (November 2007): 1121–27.

coalition is one in which the parties that are partners are able to be readily counted upon.[71] Once again, there is an emphasis on creating an effective group to conduct negotiations, one that focuses on interests and not positions.[72] The establishment of effective coalitions is also critical to prevent conflicts from escalating into damaging disputes.[73]

Watkins discussed that, in negotiations, strategy follows structure and strategy shapes structure.[74] Watkins developed a model that demonstrates how negotiations can be analyzed in terms of relationships among structure, strategy, process, and outcomes. This is known as the SSPO model.[75] The structure of complex negotiations can be analyzed along seven dimensions: issues, rounds, rules, attitudes, parties, levels, and linkages.[76] Issues describe the number of matters being addressed, from one to many. Rounds indicate the number of interactions that may occur in the process, from one to many. Rules range from fixed to negotiable rules. Attitudes range from positive preexisting attitudes to strongly negative attitudes. Parties range from two to many involved in single negotiation. Levels refer to the number of interacting levels engaged in the effort. Finally, linkages describe the overlapping set of parties that may be involved in a negotiation effort.[77] This model allows complex negotiation situations to be analyzed along the dimensions to better understand the process and where improvements may be made. A focus on these elements can assist with enhancing structure and shaping strategy.

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[71] Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, *The Dictator's Handbook: Why Bad Behavior Is Almost Always Good Politics*, reprint edition (New York: PublicAffairs, 2011), 4.

[72] Lewicki et al., *Negotiation*, 383.

[73] Michael Watkins, "Analyzing Complex Negotiations," Harvard Business School, December 1, 2003: 1.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Ibid., 2.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Ibid., 5.

The governance development process is a series of collaborative efforts that often involve negotiation situations as compromise is sought and agreements are reached. Understanding the aspects of successful negotiation is important to improving the collaborative governance development process and establishing structure for success.

## D. THE DYNAMICS OF CONFLICT

Mayer explored the dynamics of conflict extensively. Much like Lewicki, Mayer focused on the distributive versus integrative nature of power and the impact this has on conflict. In his text, Mayer described power as integrative when parties use their power to increase the overall influence of all the parties involved in a dispute or negotiation. When parties attempt to achieve their interests by directing enough power at others to force a compromise or concession, then power is being applied in a distributive way.[78] As conflict occurs, participants in the process must listen to the other parties involved in a conflict and understand the cognitive level at which they are experiencing disputes.[79]

Many forms of conflict ameliorate or resolve over time or the dispute moves to a new stage, but there are likely elements of the conflict that will continue.[80] While these conflicts may morph over time, Mayer noted that change usually occurs when the environment or structure in which they exist is altered, the individuals involved in the conflict significantly mature or evolve, or new parties are involved in the process.[81]

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[78] Bernard Mayer, *The Dynamics of Conflict: A Guide to Engagement and Intervention*, 2nd ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2012): 86.

[79] Ibid., 138.

[80] Ibid., 169.

[81] Ibid., 170.

Conflict may result in a deterioration of trust or breakdown in the collaboration process. Where parties are in conflict, they are likely to treat what their counterpart says with suspicion. Similarly, they may feel ideas that they offer are immediately met with abrupt and unambiguous dismissal.[82] If this conflict is not framed constructively, impasse is likely to result. Impasse is not always to be considered a negative consequence of conflict. At times, impasse is met for very good reasons and entities are often content to be there.[83] An impasse might actually be a natural and frequently helpful part of the conflict process that allows conflict to be addressed and resolved at a later time.

Thomas further explored the role of conflict and conflict management. He posited that conflict may have constructive as well as destructive effects, depending on its management.[84] In his writings, conflict is categorized using five conflict-handling orientations, which are plotted according to a party's desire to satisfy its own and others' concerns.[85] Figure 1 depicts this model:

[82] Mayer, *The Dynamics of Conflict: A Guide to Engagement and Intervention*, 192.

[83] Ibid., 246.

[84] Kenneth W. Thomas, *The Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology* (Chicago: Rand McNally College Publishing Co., 1976), 889.

[85] Ibid., 900.


Figure 1. Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument[86]

This model is known as the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI).[87] Five conflict-handling modes are described: competing, collaborating, compromising, avoiding, and accommodating.[88] Each of the five modes represents a different balance of assertiveness and cooperativeness describing how conflict is handled. While this model was originally intended to identify styles of individuals, similar conflict-handling modes may be applied to organizations as well. This model can be used as a descriptive representation of how organizations engage in conflict and what dimensions are being emphasized. Using the TKI, it is possible to quantify how conflict is being enacted on the distributive and integrative dimensions.

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[86] Ed Batista, "Conflict Modes and Managerial Styles," 2007, accessed November 8, 2014, http://www.edbatista.com/2007/01/conflict_modes_.html.

[87] Kenneth W. Thomas and Ralph H. Kilmann, "An Overview of the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument," 2009–2015, http://www.kilmanndiagnostics.com/overview-thomas-kilmann-conflict-mode-instrument-tki.

[88] Kenneth W. Thomas, "Conflict and Conflict Management: Reflections and Update," *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 13, no. 3 (May 1992): 266.

## E. COLLABORATION

Coordination and collaboration have received significant attention post-9/11 as critical factors to improving our homeland security capabilities and response.[89] At its core, homeland security is about cooperation and coordination. Literature specific to homeland security contends that coordination at all levels of government, including inter-government at the local level, is necessary for proper management of large-scale incidents and to improve response capabilities.[90] The events on 9/11 not only created a stress test for operations, but also for political institutions that highlighted the lack of collaboration.[91]

With funding being allocated for the development of collaborative ventures, efforts have revolved around the need for agencies within regional areas to develop partnerships and collaborate on multi-discipline/multi-jurisdictional ventures.[92] In the years that followed 9/11, there were also extensive efforts from the federal level to direct agencies to more effectively collaborate and coordinate their emergency preparedness efforts.[93]

In 2008, the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) published the National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP). This document specifically acknowledged the need for agencies from across the nation to collaborate and work collectively to improve our nation's ability to communicate and coordinate.[94] The NECP

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[89] Donald F. Kettl, *System under Stress: The Challenge to 21st Century Governance* (Kettl Series) (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2013), 30–34.

[90] Ibid., 30–34.

[91] Ibid., 44.

[92] W. Thomas Abbott, "The Benefits of Collaborative Processes for Establishing All Hazard Incident Management Teams in Urban Area Security Initiative Regions" (Naval Postgraduate School, 2013).

[93] Patricia A. Dalton, *Homeland Security: Effective Regional Coordination Can Enhance Emergency Preparedness* (GAO-04-1009) (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Accountability Office, September 15, 2004).

[94] United States Department of Homeland Security, "National Emergency Communications Plan," July 2008, accessed December 31, 2014, https://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/national_emergency_communications_plan.pdf.

specified that one of the capabilities needed was the establishment of an effective governance process and structure. To achieve an effective future state in governance, they published the capabilities chart shown in Figure 2:

| Lanes of the SAFECOM Interoperability Continuum | Capabilities Needed |
|---|---|
| *Governance* | • Strong government leadership<br>• Formal, thorough, and inclusive interagency governance structures<br>• Clear lines of communication and decision-making<br>• Strategic planning processes |
| *Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)* | • Standardized and uniform emergency responder interaction during emergency response operations<br>• Standardized use and application of interoperable emergency communications terminology, solutions, and backup systems |
| *Technology* | • Voice and data standards that pertain to real-time situational information exchange and reports for emergency responders before, during, and after response<br>• Uniform model and standard for emergency data information exchange<br>• Testing and evaluation of emergency communications technology to help agencies make informed decisions about technology<br>• Emergency response communications technology based on voluntary consensus standards<br>• Basic level of communications systems operability |
| *Training and Exercises* | • Uniform, standardized performance objectives to measure effectiveness of emergency responders communications capabilities<br>• Emergency response providers who are fully knowledgeable, trained, and exercised on the use and application of day-to-day and backup communications equipment, systems, and operations irrespective of the extent of the emergency response |
| *Usage* | • Adequate resources and planning to cover not only initial system and equipment investment but also the entire life cycle (operations, exercising, and maintenance)<br>• Broad regional (interstate and intrastate) coordination in technology investment and procurement planning |

Figure 2. Emergency Communications Needed to Achieve Future State from NECP[95]

[95] United States Department of Homeland Security, "National Emergency Communications Plan," 8.

Governance is one of the capabilities outlined in the chart.[96] Objective one of the NECP specifically called for the development of formal governance structures and the identification of clear leadership roles through collaborative efforts.[97] Governance is also a strategy and planning process, both of which are critical to homeland security efforts. While the plan outlines several initiatives, specific guidance on how to effectively collaborate to establish an effective governance development process is lacking.

These capabilities were drafted from the SAFECOM Interoperability Continuum. This document is the benchmark in which interoperable communications systems are measured in terms of achievement and effectiveness. The continuum specifically has five lanes of successful interoperable communications, with governance being one of those lanes. Figure 3 provides a graphical representation of the continuum:

[96] Ibid.

[97] United States Department of Homeland Security, "National Emergency Communications Plan," 11.

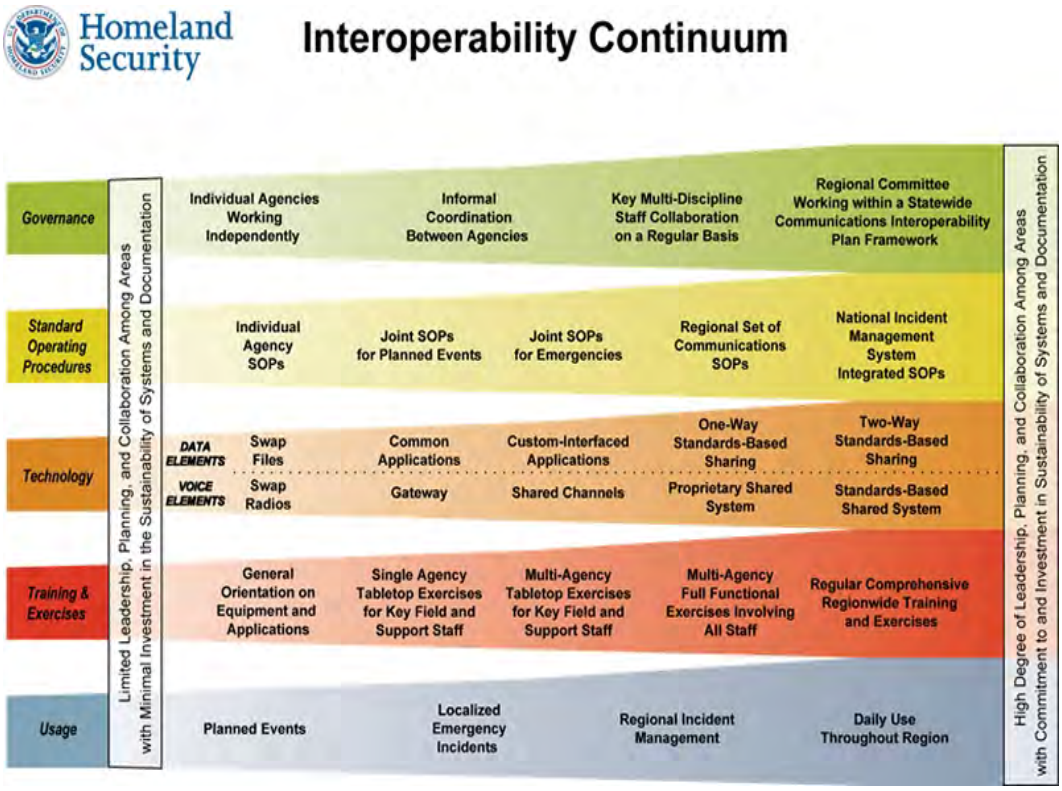


Figure 3. Interoperability Continuum from DHS Project SAFECOM[98]

The highest level of success is a regional structure that integrates within a statewide framework. What is missing from this guidance is a detailed process to achieve this governance approach. While federal strategic direction is important, the documentation and literature related to the issue surrounding how collaboration occurs in the governance lane is lacking from federally published interoperable communications guidance documentation.

The COPS Office did produce a book in 2001 that discussed steps for successful governance collaboration.[99] There is an example of some success factors in the text, but lacking are examples of collaborative efforts that fail. It is important to note that the factors that cause collaborative efforts to fail, as well as succeed, are critical to analyze in order to develop recommendations for future

[98] Department of Homeland Security, "SAFECOM in 100 Seconds," accessed June 1, 2015, http://www.safecomprogram.gov/oec/interoperability_continuum_brochure_2.pdf.

[99] Rinehart, Laszlo, and Briscoe, *Collaboration Toolkit*.

success. The text was also published before significant homeland security efforts ensued post-9/11.

While collaboration in the homeland security field is encouraged, and even required for some funding opportunities, many collaborative efforts often fail to produce innovative solutions or properly balance stakeholder concerns.[100] Collaboration often occurs in an iterative fashion over time and involves individual participants working together while representing the interests of organizational stakeholders.[101] Understanding the process is critical to successfully developing comprehensive collaborative governance processes.

Hocevar, Jansen, and Thomas extensively studied the effects of collaborative capacity in the homeland security arena. They noted that studies about the need to collaborate are prevalent, but less prevalent are studies about how to collaborate.[102] The authors provided a framework by which to analyze collaboration related to homeland security needs. They term this the Inter-Organizational Collaborative Capacity (ICC) model.[103]

The model is designed to "provide a framework for examining the enablers and barriers to developing interagency collaboration."[104] In order to create collaborative capacity, an organization must create a condition where driving forces (enablers) are greater than restraining forces (barriers).[105] The ICC model identifies five domains for building collaborative capacity: purpose and strategy,

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[100] Cynthia Hardy, Thomas B. Lawrence, and David Grant, "Discourse and Collaboration: The Role of Conversations and Collective Identity," *Academy of Management Review* 30, no. 1 (January 2005): 58.

[101] Ibid., 59.

[102] Susan Page Hocevar, Gail Fann Thomas, and Erik Jansen, "Inter-Organizational Collaboration: Addressing the Challenge," *Homeland Security Affairs* 7, no. 10 Years After: The 9/11 Essays (September 2011): 1.

[103] Ibid.

[104] Gail Fann Thomas, Susan Page Hocevar, and Erik Jansen, "A Diagnostic Approach to Building Collaborative Capacity in an Interagency Context," Naval Postgraduate School, September 25, 2006: 21.

[105] Ibid.

structure, lateral mechanisms, incentives, and people.[106] A graphical representation is presented in Figure 4:


Figure 4. Inter-Organizational Collaborative Capacity Model[107]

"Purpose and strategy" can be driven by a common risk, threat, or goal that enables a collaborative effort. This is often described as "felt need" to collaborate.[108] The role of a vision or recognition of common interests is also part of purpose and strategy. When a broader set of interests or a common goal is identified, more effective collaboration may occur.[109] "Structure" includes the formal power and authority of those engaged in the collaborative effort as well as processes and policies that effect collaboration.[110] "Lateral mechanisms" represent the trust and effective communication required for a collaborative

[106] Thomas, Hocevar, and Jansen, "A Diagnostic Approach to Building Collaborative Capacity in an Interagency Context," 6–7.

[107] Susan Page Hocevar, Erik Jansen, and Gail Fann Thomas, "Inter-Organizational Collaborative Capacity (ICC) Assessment," Naval Postgraduate School, May 1, 2012.

[108] Thomas, Hocevar, and Jansen, "A Diagnostic Approach to Building Collaborative Capacity in an Interagency Context," 7.

[109] Ibid., 8.

[110] Ibid.

effort.[111] "Incentives" may be a series of rewards or gains that create an opportunity to collaborate.[112] "People" is the final category that describes the role of individuals in the collaborative process, specifically their need to move beyond their own narrow interests and begin to appreciate others' views.[113]

Hocevar, Jansen, and Thomas' work provides 13 factors, which can be applied to a problem or case study in an effort to measure collaborative capacity.[114] This work provides a model to explore the issues surrounding the movement from an informal to a formal governance structure and the resulting increase (or decrease) in collaborative capacity because of actions of the parties involved in the process.

## F. STRATEGIC VISION

A strategic vision is "an articulation of what public sector organization should be doing in the long term and what it is trying to achieve."[115] In order to effectively manage change and institute a shift in direction, public sector organizations must develop a vision or strategic goal.[116] A vision may be used to bring about a comprehensive change and shift the balance away from previous interests. The creation or implementation of a vision or mission provides a useful tool for accountability, ensures results for the organization and encourages developing partnerships.[117]

Strategic visions provide a guiding system to drive programmatic changes. There are also a number of common elements contained in a strategic vision.

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[111] Thomas, Hocevar, and Jansen, "A Diagnostic Approach to Building Collaborative Capacity in an Interagency Context," 8.

[112] Ibid., 7–8.

[113] Ibid., 8.

[114] Susan Page Hocevar, Erik Jansen, and Gail Fann Thomas, "Building Collaborative Capacity for Homeland Security," Naval Postgraduate School, November 1, 2004.

[115] Paul Joyce, *Strategy in the Public Sector : A Guide to Effective Change Management, Wiley Series in Practical Strategy* (New York: John Wiley, 2000), 75.

[116] Ibid.

[117] Ibid.

First, there must be an emphasis on problem solving and addressing a specific issue.[118] Second, the vision must allow the organization to be responsive to its service users in the public sector.[119] Third, there must be an intention to make use of partnerships or alliances in a number of different ways that are counter to traditional methods.[120] Finally, strategic visions in modern public sector organizations often stress an end to secrecy and inflexibility practiced by older bureaucratic forms.[121]

With the implementation of a vision and focus on organizational change, there tends to be a series of conditions that are present to facilitate this shift.,[122][123] There are a few notable conditions. First, people inside and outside of the organization must share the view that there is a need for improvement or change. In addition, a new person or group comes in to act as a change agent and lead the effort or a person inside is empowered to lead the change. The role of top executives is also important to the effort. If these top-level executives involve themselves in the change effort or become heavily engaged, they may facilitate a shift towards a new vision. Finally, participants often use success to reinforce results, and the results become accepted and institutionalized.[124]

When establishing a strategic plan or implementing a new vision, successful managers often use practice and experimentation to achieve their results.[125] A manager seeking change will often develop an idea or vision of what

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[118] Joyce, *Strategy in the Public Sector*, 78.

[119] Ibid.

[120] Ibid., 79.

[121] Ibid., 81.

[122] Hal G. Rainey, *Understanding and Managing Public Organizations*, 4th ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009).

[123] Larry E. Greiner, “Patterns of Organization Change,” *Harvard Business Review* 45, no. 3 (June 5, 1967): 119–30.

[124] James L. Perry, ed., *Handbook of Public Administration*, 2nd ed., revised edition (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996), 163.

[125] Anne Khademian, *Working With Culture: The Way the Job Gets Done In Public Programs* (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2002), 48.

needs to change, articulate it in some form, and incrementally move along the process to find a way to accomplish the change.[126] This process demonstrates that the implementation of a new strategic vision is often a process of trial and error along with experimenting with the integration of task, resources, and environment.[127]

Once conditions are present to facilitate a new strategic vision and the process implemented, the ability to waive traditional bureaucratic rules seems to be a key factor in stimulating change and reform.[128] Once new processes and structures are in place, consistently stressing the importance of communication—up, down, and all around—is important to executives, potential partners, and every member of the organization.[129] New strategic visions communicated from the top throughout the involved organizations improves the possibility that the organizational shift will occur and achieve success.

Timing is also critical for changes to occur or implementing a new strategic vision.[130] While the need for change and pressure to implement change are factors, the timing and approach impact the reaction to change.[131] Once strategy, communications, and timing are determined, the need to sustain a vision is also essential to successful change. Sirkin defined four factors that determine the outcome of any transformation initiative.[132] First, the duration of time until the change program is completed.[133] Second, the project team's

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[126] Khademian, *Working With Culture*, 48.

[127] Ibid.

[128] L. R. Jones, *From Bureaucracy to Hyperarchy in Netcentric and Quick Learning Organizations : Exploring Future Public Management Practice*, Research in Public Management (Unnumbered) (Charlotte, NC: Information Age Pub. Inc., 2007), 117.

[129] Ibid., 118.

[130] Alan R. Shark, *CIO Leadership for Public Safety Communications: Emerging Trends and Practices* (Alexandria, VA: Public Technology Institute, 2012), 198.

[131] Ibid.

[132] Harold L. Sirkin, Perry Keenan, and Alan Jackson, "The Hard Side of Change Management," *Harvard Business Review* 83, no. 10 (October 2005): 108–18.

[133] Ibid., 110–111.

performance integrity and the ability to complete the initiative on time.[134] Third, the commitment to change that top management and employees affected by the change display.[135] Finally, the effort over and above the usual work that change demands.[136]

## G. CONCLUSION

Since the events on 9/11, the issue of collaborating and developing regional interoperable communications systems has been at the forefront for the first responder and homeland security community. Much of the literature currently available does not specifically address the issues related to forming these public safety governance structures and the associated problems with cooperation and collaboration to accomplish interoperable, regional technology systems. Much is known about the individual aspects of the overall organizational design, negotiation processes, collaboration, and emergence/governance process as it relates to business or other public sector models. A review of the literature suggests there is a gap in applying these concepts as they unfold over time in a homeland security context, such as developing governance of an evolving regional public safety communications system.

The strength of the existing literature is the amount of information available and empirical data regarding themes that impact effective collaborative governance development processes. This case study will provide the opportunity to apply the current literature and participant feedback/observation to a situation that has developed and evolved over a significant time. This will provide further opportunities for research, evaluation, or capture lessons learned and best practices for future similar endeavors. This study may also contribute to the developmental aspects of interagency collaboration in a homeland security context.

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[134] Sirkin, Keenan, and Jackson, "The Hard Side of Change Management," 111–112.

[135] Ibid., 112–113.

[136] Ibid., 113.

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# III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

## A. OVERVIEW OF THE METHODOLOGY

This thesis explores the development of a collaborative governance system for a regional communications network. To capture the changing aspects of the governance process, a case study explores the dynamics of five cities and two regional cooperatives over 16 years. The network's genesis was an informal governance structure established in the late 1990s between the City of Phoenix and the City of Mesa. The purpose was to design, build, and implement a regional wireless communications network. Starting in 2004, these two organizations attempted to formalize their governance structure, and this eventually led to the separation of the joint venture. In 2008, these same organizations once again formed a partnership to establish a collaborative governance process. This latest effort has been successful in developing and implementing a formal system. The City of Phoenix and the City of Mesa initiated the early process, but additional partners were added in the later phases of the governance development process, with 20 participating jurisdictions today. Research methods were chosen to study three distinct phases of the governance development process:

- 1999–2004 – Informal Governance Operations (Successful)
- 2004–2008 – Formalized Governance Development (Unsuccessful)
- 2008–Current – Formalized Governance Development (Successful)

## B. PARTICIPANTS

In total, seven participants were selected because of their significant exposure to the governance development process across each phase. The participants hold executive-level positions and were selected based on their ability to provide constructive information and insights on the various phases of the governance development process.

Individuals interviewed were selected based on their strategic and policy-making role within their respective agencies. Due to the authority level of the

participants, they also represented their organizational insights on the process. Participants were experienced, knowledgeable, and offered a variety of perspectives on the process to gather qualitative data for analysis. While not all participants were involved in all phases, each was able to provide details on the phases in which they had experience as well as historical background on prior phases in which they may not have directly participated.

Participants were selected from multiple jurisdictions and from different perspectives to reduce the bias and provide for various points of view to increase confidence in the results. Throughout this thesis, participants will be referred to by participant code. Table 1 shows the participant code, the agency they represent, their role at the time of the process, and the phases in which they were involved:

| Participant Code | Agency | Role | Phases Involved |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | City of Mesa | Assistant Fire Chief | I, II, III |
| B | TOPAZ Regional Wireless Cooperative (Mesa) | Executive Director | II, III |
| C | City of Tempe | City Manager | II, III |
| D | Regional Wireless Cooperative (Phoenix) | Executive Director | II, III |
| E | City of Scottsdale | Chief Information Officer | II, III |
| F | City of Phoenix | Enterprise Technology Manager | I, II, III |
| G | City of El Mirage | Police Chief | II, III |

Table 1. Participant Detail

## C. INTERVIEW PROCESS

In accordance with Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) protocols, an Institutional Review Board (IRB) package was completed for submission, review, and approval. IRB approval was obtained to conduct human subject research.[137] All aspects of the interview process followed established NPS protocols.[138]

The seven participants received a recruitment letter describing the nature of the research. A copy of the recruitment letter is available in Appendix A. The

[137] NPS IRB Protocol Number: NPS.2015.0001-IR-EM2-A.

[138] Specific information detailing the NPS research protocol is available at http://www.nps.edu/Research/IRB_Applications.htm.

completion of an informed consent document describing the purpose and nature of the study, the rights provided as a participant, and the acknowledgement the interview would be digitally recorded and transcribed, was completed by each participant prior to the interview being conducted. A copy of the consent form is provided in Appendix B. Participation in the interview was strictly voluntary, with no compensation provided for participating in the research. All participants consented to be named in the study if needed.

Interviews were conducted one-on-one in a private setting of the participant's choosing, with no influence from executives or outside personnel. Each interview lasted approximately 60–90 minutes. Semi-structured, open-ended interviews were conducted with a series of lead questions and follow-on probe questions based on the participant's response. The interview began with an overview of the three phases, describing the time frame for each, to allow the participant to reference the phases throughout the interview. The structured interview questions provided below attempted to understand the development process:

- What was your role and responsibility in the governance process?
- What governing structure was in place during each stage of the process?
- What were the successes and issues encountered with each phase of the process?
- What was the focus of the group participating in the governance process (i.e., operational versus strategic)?
- How did the process fit into the Thomas Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument at the organizational level?
- What was the motivation to move from each stage of the process?

Since each participant had a unique role in the process, open-ended follow-on probe questions were asked to elicit further clarification. This method was selected to allow participants to describe their experience in the process with nominal direction from the researcher.

The interviews were digitally recorded so that verbatim data was captured to identify themes. Following the interview, the audio files were transcribed.

Transcripts yielded 164 pages of text that were used for the analysis. Upon completion of the transcription, the audio recordings were destroyed to eliminate any personally identifying information (PII) associated with audio recordings.

## D. QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

The coding process was derived from Boyatzis's guide to developing thematic code.[139] Comments made during the interviews were broken down into data units. These descriptive blocks of information were examined together to discover themes and variations, and to portray meaning.[140] These themes were evaluated using relevant theories and conceptual models to identify factors that contributed to both the successes and the challenges in the development of this governance process. Coding of the transcribed data was conducted to recognize and identify common concepts, themes, events, examples, and topical markers such as names, organizations, or specific incidents.[141]

Once all possible themes were identified, recurring themes were further narrowed to the most common themes that presented themselves across all three phases of the governance development process. This process allowed for each theme and concept to be extracted from the cumulative interview data and organized/combined for analysis. It also allowed for each theme and concept to be evaluated for its success or failure during each phase of the governance development process and to demonstrate how the themes and concepts evolved over time.

Nine specific themes were derived from this iterative process and used to categorize the transcribed data:

- Governance (Operational, Policy, Institutional)
- Negotiation

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[139] Richard E. Boyatzis, *Transforming Qualitative Information: Thematic Analysis and Code Development*, 1st ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications,1998), 31.

[140] Nigel King, *Interviews in Qualitative Research* (London: SAGE Publications, 2009), 152–153.

[141] Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 192.

- Strategic Vision
- Conflict (Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument, Control, Communication)
- Collaborative Capacity
- Authority (Politics, Leadership)
- Commonalities
- Experience/Knowledge/Learning
- Miscellaneous

Under each theme, additional concepts were further defined to allow in-depth analysis of the raw data. Concepts were coded from the transcribed audio and documented by phase (I, II, and III) in a spreadsheet format. Each coded unit was labeled with a coding key system that allowed the specific quote to be identified for the discussion and findings section. For example, the cell for phase I “Authority” has three data entries from two interviewees. The “GB1” refers to a specific participant, “P1” the page of the transcribed data, and “L24-26” the line numbers on the transcript. The wording is the researcher’s summary of the interviewee’s comment. An example of this process is provided in Table 2 to demonstrate the method used for data gathering.

| Coding Concept | Phase I | Phase II | Phase III |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | **AUTHORITY** | |
| Politics | | GB2_P2_L30-31 (city manager asked to include others) GB2_P6_L13-15 (ultimatum from city managers - stopped process) GB2_P20_L16-19 (outside leaders stopped the process) DS_P7_L17-20 (management involvement led to breakdown) DS_P9_L4-7 (policy makers involved too late) CM_P6_L4-5 (no intermediary role) DF2_P3_L6-9 (dependent on others for information) BH_P15_L1-4 (external influences impacted process) BP_P9_L4-6 (need to involve higher level in process) DS_P11_L11 (ownership and control) CM_P4_L34-36 (lack of control led to concern) DF2_P1_L10-12 (ownership and equity) BH_P6_L10-11 (finite resources) BP_P11_L4-7, 21-22 (too late to involve political bodies to salvage process) BP_P12_L4-5 (outside influences) SC_P5_L19-21 (politics over control cause derailment) SC_P6_L22-23 (politics influenced the outcome) | GB2_P11_L1-3 (success due to learning and change in leadership) GB2_P14_L29-31 (involvement of more political entities) GB2_P19_L12-13 (limited outside influence) DS_P14_L23 (strategic vision) DS_P21_L24-26 (no outside pressure) CM_P14_L36-38 (need political support) DF2_P7_L33-35 (fire involvement) DF2_P24_L17 (diplomacy) |
| Authority | GB1_P1_L24-26 (limited decision-making authority) BP_P1_L25-28 (operational focus, limited authority) BP_P3_L5-8 (informal operational authority) | GB2_P3_L12-15 (operational personnel involved) GB2_P4_L8-11 (not appropriate level of authority to decide) GB2_P5_L34-36 (communication breakdown among participants with limited authority) CM_P6_L23-25 (once it went bad, not high enough level participation) CM_P6_L31-32 (elevated after conflict arose) CM_P7_L12-13 (earlier intervention with higher levels) BH_P8_L16-19 (did not want to give up authority) BH_P9_L4-5 (different perspective/greater good) BP_P8_L3-5, 20-21 (committee was lower level - need to raise issues higher) | GB2_P11_L6-8 (group make-up higher level) GB2_P22_L11-16 (higher level policy-making process) DS_P10_L23-25 (higher level participation) DS_P20_L34-35 (appropriate level to move forward) DS_P26_L19-20 (right organizational buildup important) DF2_P9_L22-24 (higher level participation) DF2_P9_L32-25 (board level participants - decision makers) DF2_P11_L34-37 (higher level participation critical to success) DF2_P9_L22-24 (higher level participation) DF2_P9_L32-25 (board level participants - decision makers) DF2_P11_L34-37 (higher level critical to success) DF2_P12_L8-10 (executive level decision makers) DF2_P20_L28-29 (choose participants carefully based on authority) BH_P12_L34-35 (decision-making authority) BH_P18_L30-32 (strategic players - no interest) BP_P17_L7-8 (higher level participation) BP_P17_18-19 (bigger picture thinking) BP_P25_L29 (right people early in the process) BP_P26_L1-2 (decision makers needed) SC_P12_L25-27 (change in leadership impacted decision-making authority) |
| Leadership | | DS_P9_L4-7 (policy makers involved too late) CM_P3_L5-7 (no manager level participation) CM_P7_L12-13 (earlier intervention with higher levels) DF2_P3_L6-9 (dependent on others for information) BP_P11_L4-7, 21-22 (too late to involve political bodies to salvage process) | GB2_P11_L1-3 (success due to learning and change in leadership) GB2_P11_L6-8 (group make-up higher level) GB2_P17_L17-18 (new leadership more positive) DS_P14_L23 (strategic vision) DS_P15_L4 (champion for cause) CM_P8_26-28 (new leadership can provide new direction) CM_P9_L2-5 (positioning important) DF2_P6_L24-27 (champion) DF2_P9_L22-24 (higher level participation) DF2_P10_L11 (identify obstructions) DF2_P19_L4-5, 11 (commitment of leadership) BH_P10_L28-32 (role of visionary leader) SC_P13_L3-6 (leadership sets the tone for the process) |

Table 2. Example Data Analysis

## E. SUMMARY

This chapter describes the process that was used to identify themes related to governance process, negotiation, conflict, and collaboration. Additionally, it described the details about the interviews with the seven participants. Chapter IV will provide in-depth descriptions of the eight distinctive themes that emerged from the analysis.

# IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

## A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings from seven individuals who were interviewed for this study. Once all interview audio was transcribed, coded, and analyzed, nine major themes emerged. This chapter presents the results of the thematic analysis along with a discussion that is grounded in the extant literature. Themes are grouped by categories related to the governance development process. The categories are:

- Goals for Governance Development (governance, strategic vision, and commonalities)
- Participant Characteristics (authority and experience/knowledge/ learning)
- Organizational Collaborative Capacity
- Processes (negotiation and conflict management)
- Miscellaneous

Each theme shows a progression over three phases in order to capture the developmental nature of the governance process. Appendix E provides a quick reference chart detailing the themes and actions within each phase. The three phases referenced in this case analysis are:

- 1999–2004: Informal Governance Operations (Successful)
- 2004–2008: Formalized Governance Development (Unsuccessful)
- 2008–Current: Formalized Governance Development (Successful)

Figure 5 presents a progression of the events over the course of the three phases.

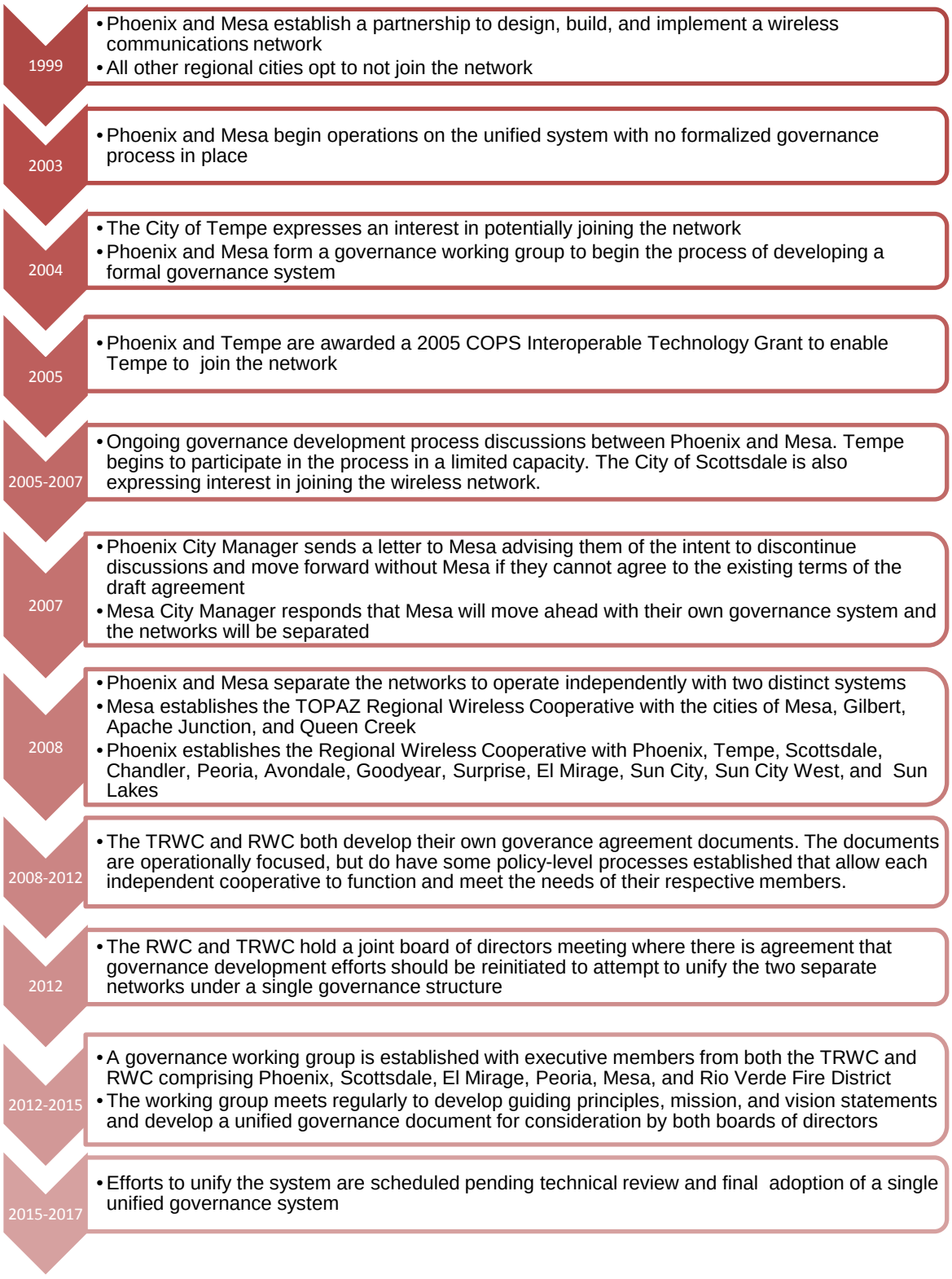


Figure 5. Progression of Events over the Three Phases

## B. GOALS FOR GOVERNANCE DEVELOPMENT

Governance development processes must establish effective goals for success. Achieving these objectives increases the opportunities for the development of a comprehensive governance process. During the analysis of the data from the interview participants, three distinct goals emerged that are attributed to success: governance processes, the establishment of a strategic vision, and a focus on commonalities.

### 1. Governance

Governance seeks to achieve direction, control, and coordination of individuals or organizations through the establishment of processes and objectives. In the public sector, governance strives to develop procedures and policies, and to institutionalize processes and relationships. Throughout the analysis of the data, these distinct objectives became evident as the participants and organizations evolved from an operational focus to institutionalization throughout the course of the three phases.

#### *a. Results*

In phase I of the governance development process, interview participants noted that the level of participation in the governance discussions was heavily focused on operational issues. Most of the individuals assigned to the team had technical backgrounds and were the same individuals who created the initial network design and conducted operations of the day-to-day telecommunications system.

In phase I, no formal governance structure existed. In other words, no formal policies or procedures were promulgated. Instead, team members focused on building consensus around the technical and operational aspects of the system. In this phase, technical teams would make and receive phone calls, have impromptu meetings, or resolve issues that arose amongst the technical staff who were tasked with keeping the system operational. If conflict arose, the

individuals would work to reach consensus absent any established formalized decision-making process.

Participant F summarized this process: the parties would "just call each other up when we needed to or when we had meetings to discuss issues."[142] Participant D characterized this as operating under a "handshake deal" rather than a formalized structure or clearly defined organizational process.[143] During phase I, only the City of Phoenix and the City of Mesa were partners. Later in phase I, a few smaller participants were added, but Phoenix and Mesa continued to manage the system under an informal governance arrangement.

In early phase II, additional participants included the cities of Gilbert and Queen Creek, and the Apache Junction Fire District. As additional cities such as Tempe, Scottsdale, and Peoria sought to join the network, formalized governance discussions began to establish a codification of the process and provide structure to the organization that had been operating under the informal arrangement between the original two partners (Phoenix and Mesa). The addition of new partners provided the transition to move to phase II of the governance development process.

In phase II, there continued to be an emphasis on the operational aspects of managing the communications system. The second phase exhibited some aspects of strategic and policy processes being implemented, but discussions often continued to revolve around simply producing a document with an emphasis on solving operational concerns and not on long-term processes or formalized institutionalization of the system.

Participant A stated that the goal given to him in phase II was to take the existing process and "form it into a working document we could adopt and move on with."[144] There was a belief that the process would simply document the

[142] Interview with Participant F, November 26, 2014.

[143] Interview with Participant D, November 18, 2014.

[144] Interview with Participant A, November 17, 2014.

existing practices and allow the process to move forward quickly with establishing a governance structure that would provide operational guidance and basic structure for the network. The expectation was for a higher-level product, but the participants in phase II were not the appropriate individuals to accomplish the objective.

Participant A also noted that phase I and early phase II were built on a platform of trust and cooperation, which allowed significant attention to be placed on solving technical and operational issues early in the process.[145] A noteworthy product of the early phases was a comprehensive operational document that formed the basis for later governance discussions. In the later stages of phase II, however, when the discussion began to focus on structural governance processes and policy discussions, progress began to falter. Participant A noted there were three distinct issues that led to this breakdown: ownership of radio frequencies, property ownership for communications network infrastructure, and the distribution of voting rights (i.e., authority and control).[146] These three issues highlighted a lack of consensus on specific rules, decision-making processes, and conflict resolution mechanisms.

After the governance development process failed in the latter stages of phase II, there was a lapse in time where the two systems operated independently, with each establishing its own cooperatives and autonomous governance systems. The Phoenix Regional Wireless Cooperative (RWC) established governance with the cities of Phoenix, Tempe, and Scottsdale, as well as several smaller fire districts, comprising the governing body. The Mesa Trunked Open Arizona Network (TOPAZ) established itself with the cities of Mesa, Gilbert, and Queen Creek, as well as the Apache Junction Fire District. Both separate networks, however, still felt a need to develop a single comprehensive governance development process despite reaching an earlier

[145] Interview with Participant A, November 17, 2014.

[146] Ibid.

impasse. The driver was primarily to establish a regionally integrated system with the appropriate governance mechanism to support the unified system.

Phase III was initiated by the desire to have both networks consolidated under a single governance structure. The governing bodies of the RWC and TRWC met and collectively agreed that an effort be initiated to discuss the merging of the two disparate systems to achieve greater efficiencies and resource utilization within the region. At the beginning of phase III, the RWC included 20 member organizations and TOPAZ comprised six member organizations.

As phase III began, participation was marked by high-level decision makers engaged in the governance development process. The teams involved in this phase were comprised of policy makers who had significant authority to make binding decisions on behalf of their respective agencies. Operational-level personnel were used as subject matter experts for input, but were no longer the primary participants in the process.

Participant G noted that the policy-making individuals had greater experience at governance development and were able to draw upon other collective experiences in their executive roles to address governance concerns that arose.[147] Throughout the operation of the separate systems, several of the earlier issues such as ownership of frequencies and retaining infrastructure (real property) had been resolved. The earlier issues that were not resolved prior to the impasse were now no longer issues since they had been resolved by each of the individual governance bodies throughout the course of their operations. Control and voting structure, however, was defined in each separate governance system, but control and voting structures were still critical topics between the RWC and TRWC that had yet to be resolved to allow a seamless integration of the two bodies.

[147] Interview with Participant G, December 11, 2014.

Because the more senior governance team members did not have operational responsibilities, they were able to focus on policy-level decisions, unlike the earlier operational participants who were directly involved with decisions that could personally and professionally impact them.[148] Participant F noted that in earlier phases, the personal stake in the direct outcome limited those engaged in the process and prevented participants from compromising or changing positions due to their day-to-day functions potentially being eliminated should a successful governance process be established.[149]

Because policy making became the focus for phase III, this shifted the emphasis to the institutionalization and codification of the governance development process. With top-level officials engaged in the process, it was possible to address issues of authority and establish a formalized intergovernmental agreement. Rather than simply focus on producing an operational document to direct functional or policy-level operations, the importance shifted to institutionalization. This effort sought to formalize the governance structure while reducing operational-level guidance in the process. The focus in phase III was to establish institutionalized structures and processes that would allow operational guidance to be developed outside of the governance process to be more effective at separating the governance structure from day-to-day operations.

The early documentation produced from phases I and II was specific as to operational and technical processes and procedures, with a narrow concentration on policy or structure. The shift to institutionalization moved the focus to strategic concepts detailing higher-level processes that specified how partnerships would be established, managed, and maintained, not specifically how a communications system should operate technically or operationally.

[148] Interview with Participant F, November 26, 2014.

[149] Ibid.

### *b. Discussion*

Governance is defined as “the means for achieving direction, control, and coordination of individuals and organizations with varying degrees of autonomy in order to advance joint objectives.”[150] Governance is more than just the institution of a process; it is a mechanism by which objectives are specified and advanced by all parties involved.

In phase I, the participants were concentrated on operating a wireless system and successfully functioned using an informal structure with no specific guidance or direction. This was successful when the objective was solely service delivery and not policy development. The limited established policy allowed for the process to work well, despite individuals with limited decision-making authority assigned the task of governance development.

Attention was directed at the operation of the network. The concentration was not on advancing any specific objectives, but on keeping the system operational. This operational-level participation offered individuals the ability to work in an informal manner and address operational concerns quickly and effectively. The processes described in phase I are consistent with Imperial’s LCAF model at level one.[151] Imperial described this level as one where line-level personnel work with counterparts on projects or initiatives to get them established and functional. Routinely at this level, the participants are not operating under any formalized structure or system. Rather, they are collaborating to achieve a goal or objective, which is usually some type of service delivery or other deliverable.

In phase II, the shift to formalizing the policy development process occurred. By leaving existing operational personnel in place as the chief decision makers, however, the process reached impasse and discussions ceased. While

[150] Imperial and Kauneckis, “Moving from Conflict to Collaboration,” 1011.·

[151] Imperial, “Using Collaboration as a Governance Strategy,” 288.

there was an effort to engage higher-level policy makers in phase II, the addition of this level of participant occurred too late in the process to achieve success.

Additionally, the phase II focus remained largely on operational aspects of governance and did not evolve to the second level of joint action defined in Imperial's LCAF.[152] Imperial defined the second level as the place where midlevel administrators negotiate policies, but do not focus on strategic levels of decision making.[153] Phase II would have been able to achieve this second level had higher-level administrators been involved earlier in the process to negotiate policies specifically directed at higher-level structure versus operational structure. This movement towards Imperial's second level of the LCAF began to exhibit itself in phase II, but occurred later in the phase after relationships and negotiations were at already seemingly insolvent stages.

Strategic levels of governance seek to formalize and institutionalize shared guidelines and norms that direct the operational and policy levels. In phase III, participation was elevated to the executive level. This led to a shift in focus to institutionalizing processes and formalizing rules, decision-making processes, and conflict resolution mechanisms. The evolution from operational and policy-level processes to institutional levels following the LCAF also allowed the governance process to become less reliant on individuals and personal relationships, as occurred in earlier phases.

While individuals and relationships are important to collaborative processes, to reach institutional levels the process must evolve to focus on codification and less on operations.[154] As the parties involved in phase III codified their mission, vison, and objectives, they moved from strictly operations and policy development to institutionalization. The development of a single governance system from two separate systems was a critical step in the

[152] Imperial, "Using Collaboration as a Governance Strategy," 288.

[153] Ibid.

[154] Ibid., 303–307.

institutionalization process based on a shared set of objectives to advance the process, consistent with Imperial's framework.

Imperial stated that developing any new organization and creating collaborative organizations present similar challenges. Collaborative organizations are typically the product of a series of efforts at the operational and policy-making levels.[155] Before an organization can reach a collaborative state, time and effort must be spent building relationships and trust, which are important steps to joint action. This occurred in phases I and II to a limited extent but was enhanced in phase III, leading to greater success.

Additionally, public managers need to maximize their learning opportunities and allow sufficient time to gradually scale up and expand collaborative efforts.[156] Based on the evolution of the phases and consistent with Imperial's findings in his study, this case suggests that some engagement at all of the various phases (operational, policy-making, institutionalization) is required to reach a fully collaborative state. What is unclear is if all three of these steps are necessary to reach a fully collaborative state. In this case analysis, elements of all three were present across all phases, but it is undetermined if the sequential nature of each phase is necessary for success. It may be possible for all three levels of the framework to be addressed simultaneously rather than sequentially.

The phases are also consistent with Bardach's emergence phenomenon, which finds that collaborative efforts at one level commonly lead directly or indirectly to activities at other levels.[157] Bardach refers to this as the momentum process. As the collaborative governance process evolves, a series of changes occur that influences each level of the process.[158]

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[155] Imperial, "Using Collaboration as a Governance Strategy," 306.

[156] Ibid.

[157] Bardach, "Developmental Dynamics," 155–157.

[158] Ibid., 156.

These changes include increasing enthusiasm. While interest grows, a small network of advocates emerges and infects others with enthusiasm, heightens expectations, and elicits additional resources. Bandwagon effects occur. As the process emerges and appears to be achieving success, more resources are attracted. Consensus and trust also cultivate. When more individuals reach consensus, it becomes easier for outside individuals to be influenced and participate. In addition, interpersonal trust grows with experience, becomes a means for expanding the circle of trust, and creates the communications capacity and the social capital to expand and continue to achieve successful outcomes.[159] This gives these processes an evolutionary or emergent character. Governance develops over time and the progression of this case across the three phases is consistent with Imperial and Bardach's models on governance.

### 2. Strategic Vision

A strategic vision articulates the long-term objectives for an organization. A vision may be established to bring about comprehensive change and shift from previous interests to new ones. An effective strategic vision enables organizations to develop specific objectives to meet the established vision. In this case study, the strategic vision came late in the governance development process and encouraged the effort to move the concentration from strictly an operational focus to strategic efforts in the governance development process.

#### *a. Results*

In phase I, the agencies involved in the operation of the system were initially concerned with ensuring the successful technical operation of the communications network. The early participants were specifically directed to ensure the system was operational and met the needs of the public safety users. The initial mission was to ensure that the system was built and operated at public

[159] Bardach, "Developmental Dynamics," 155–157.

safety standards. While the focus was on public safety, there was no defined or expressly published mission statement, guiding principles, or vision statement in either phase I or phase II. Participant F stated the people involved were aware of a need to think strategically in phase I and early phase II, but at the time, "that really wasn't our concern."[160]

The cities of Mesa and Phoenix were not concerned with long-term strategy or developing strategic plans until the city of Tempe showed an interest in joining the network. Once the network began to expand with the addition of new members, it became clear that a more structured and formalized governance process would be required. Participant A noted that the informal process "would never survive" if there was not a vision to develop a more comprehensive governance process with more than just a few partners.[161]

During phase II, participants began thinking at the strategic level, but there was still not a clear vision of the desired long-term outcome of the governance development process. In addition to a lack of a strategic vision, there was also limited direction on what was to be accomplished specifically in terms of a final team deliverable. The goal in phase II was focused on completing the assigned task of quickly producing a governance document that was still substantially operational in nature to accommodate new potential members.

This goal led to conflict between agency interests and these concerns drove participant priorities more than the needs of public safety. In phase I, there was clearly a focus on ensuring public safety needs were met first. In phase II, however, participants moved away from a focus on public safety and moved towards a focus on individual agency needs such as the protection of assets and resources. As discussions began to focus on control and assets, the conversations about putting public safety needs first became subordinate.

[160] Interview with Participant F, November 26, 2014.

[161] Interview with Participant A, November 17, 2014.

Despite the system in phase I providing exceptional interoperability, as the process broke down and reached impasse, the ability for public safety responders to have seamless interoperability ceased to exist as it had before. This compromised the original focus of public safety as the priority. At the end of phase II when the process reached impasse, Phoenix and Mesa independently completed their respective governance documents to establish methods of control and asset protection of the now two separate systems.[162]

The strategic-level focus of phase III was evident before discussions were initiated. Once the governance working group was appointed by executive leadership, the team immediately began work on a set of guiding principles, mission statement, and strategic vision statement over the course of several meetings. The development of these materials was time consuming, but was met with positive reaction among participants and became a tool for consensus building. The resulting document focused entirely on developing these strategic guidance materials before any conversations concerning governance began. Participant E stated about this document that, "it really was the pinning or the foundation of what we were trying to achieve and what rules of engagement we would use."[163]

This document provided the basis for the desired long-term outcomes from the governance development process in phase III. Participant E supplied a copy of the final document during his interview. Figure 6 is a copy of the guiding principles, mission, and vision statement established by the team.

[162] The RWC Governance Agreement is available at http://rwcaz.org/webdocs/misc/rwc-governance.pdf. The TRWC Governance Agreement is available at http://www.topazrwc.org/pdf/3-19-12/GovernanceAgreement2012.pdf.

[163] Interview with Participant E, November 25, 2014.

**Guiding Principles –** Agreed upon ideals that the group will keep in mind when making all decisions, to ensure we are focused on achieving our ultimate goal

Provide Valley-wide operable & interoperable communication services which are focused on the operational needs of the end user – universal "push to talk" coverage should be our overarching goal

- Maximize use of all existing resources including financial and personnel
- Establish and maintain system compatibility which is sustainable over time
- Focus on the needs of the end users which includes both first responders and the public

**Mission & Vision Statements**

- Mission:
  To achieve excellence in radio and data communications supporting public safety and municipal partners.
- Vision:
  To assure seamless radio and data communications to meet the operational needs of the users in a cost effective and sustainable manner.

Figure 6. Guiding Principles, Mission & Vision Statement[164]

Participant E stated that having this document as the first page of every meeting agenda guided the strategic vision of the group and provided a persistent reminder of their responsibility. He stated, "it breaks down all of the competitiveness and it breaks down what we are trying to achieve and why are we really looking to do this, and it really helps to be a catalyst for pulling people together and understanding there is a reason for doing this."[165]

Participant A was involved in all phases of this process and noted his experience from phase I to phase III: "I believe we had a mission [in phase I], we didn't have any guiding principles. We didn't spend nearly as much time up front on those last time [phases I and II] as we did this time [phase III]. I believe it

[164] Interview with Participant E, November 25, 2014.

[165] Interview with Participant E, November 25, 2014.

helps."[166] Participant A felt that while having a mission was important, the guiding principles established the framework by which to operate and provides the vision for the participants to achieve. This was missing from phases I and II, but once established in phase III he felt it helped the process attain more success and remain focused on what they were ultimately seeking to achieve.

In phase III, when the governance working group provided updates to senior officials and stakeholders, they would ensure their strategic vision was shared on every document to stress the importance of the vision in their process. Additionally, in phase III, the emphasis was once again returned to ensuring that public safety needs were met first and agency-specific desires secondary. The guiding principles, mission, and vision were designed to keep the focus on the requirements of first responders. As the team developed their guiding principles, mission, and vision statement, they focused entirely on the needs of public safety first in all of their discussions and negotiations. They also viewed the citizens as their end users of the system, not only public safety. Their concentration was on ensuring that all stakeholder interests were met and remained the principal focus of the process.

On several occasions, the governance team in phase III would refer back to this document when a member felt the discussion or governance process was losing focus. Participant E, who is the chair of the governance team in phase III, reiterated that on several occasions the vision was putting public safety and the citizenry first. He stated that in their discussions, "it [the partnership] might be more expensive potentially, but that's the right thing to do [mitigate potential risks to public safety]."[167]

### *b. Discussion*

The creation or implementation of a strategic vision or mission statement provides a useful tool for accountability, ensures results for the organization, and

[166] Interview with Participant A, November 17, 2014.

[167] Interview with Participant E, November 25, 2014.

encourages developing partnerships.[168] The participants in phase III realized the value of ensuring that a strategic vision was clearly documented before any discussions occurred or conflict arose. This material established the baseline on which the process would operate and defined the rules of engagement. Several of the participants in phase III noted that when discussions would become mired in trivial discussion or conflict occurred over unsubstantial issues, they would refer back to the guiding principles to ensure accountability and refocus their efforts.

The strategic vision should always be at the forefront of all discussions, processes, and communications when planting new ventures.[169] This sharing of a strategic vision ensures that organizational shift will occur and achieve success.[170] The data above from phase III shows that the team working the governance development process established a common vision and championed the cause that met the desired outcome for elected and senior officials. Once the group in phase III shared the strategic vision and routinely communicated that vision, their efforts garnered the support and organizational change needed to move from an unsuccessful to a successful governance development process.

### 3. Commonalities

As parties emphasize differences, they focus on the issues that are the source of conflict between their organizations. A focus on differences allows for disagreement to become the center of the discussions rather than seeking to understand commonalities. When the parties seek to understand the commonalities and minimize the differences, they are able to better understand the other's needs and objectives. A shift in the frame of reference allows the governance development process to succeed by emphasizing commonalities and minimizing differences to allow for the search for solutions that meet the needs

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[168] Joyce, *Strategy in the Public Sector*, 75.

[169] Jones, From Bureaucracy to Hyperarchy, 117.

[170] Ibid.

and objectives of all parties. This focus on commonalities also shifts the interaction from a competitive process to a more collaborative mindset.

### *a. Results*

Phase I was characterized by a mutual agreement of the two parties to operate a unified communications network. When participants began the process of formalizing the governance development process in phase II, there was initial agreement on mutual interests in commonalities between the two parties. Both parties shared a common focus of providing exceptional public safety radio network coverage, an effort to avoid duplication of effort by sharing network infrastructure, and maximization of staff resources to minimize the cost of personnel for both entities. As the process began to deteriorate and conflict escalated, however, the parties began to focus on differences between the groups rather than attention to commonalities.

When focus shifted to issues like voting rights and control (authorities), conflict increased. Parties focused extensively on their differences, which led to further disagreement on how to address those dissimilarities. Participant E stated "it was obvious that they [the parties] worked very hard together on things and they got to a certain point and then they had a divorce."[171] As the parties reached a point where there was exclusive attention on the differences, the process reached impasse.

Participant F put this into context by stating, "this governance group in phase II was really focusing on these three differences [ownership of frequencies, ownership of real property, and voting structure] that were deal breakers, whereas this group [in phase III] is like there's 25 things we agree on and there are three things we don't agree on, maybe we should start with those [that we agree on]?"[172] As participant F noted, as the process migrated from

[171] Interview with Participant E, November 25, 2014.

[172] Interview with Participant F, November 26, 2014.

phase II to phase III the attention of the group shifted from an emphasis on differences to a concentration on what is common between the parties.

Phase III was characterized by emphasizing those areas where there was agreement initially to reach early success and mutual agreement before attention shifted to the differences. In phase III, there were two separate governance documents that the parties were attempting to consolidate.[173] The parties involved in phase III began by comparing the two documents for similarity and documenting how close they were to each other.

As participant F stated, there were a substantial number of commonalities between the two parties and relatively few differences. Rather than spend a considerable amount of time on those areas where there were commonalities, the parties were able to reach early consensus on a majority of the issues and then apply their time and efforts to those where there were differences.

Participant A mentioned the shift in approach from phase II to phase III stating "the first time around was, 'there are differences—these are where we can't agree and we're not going to agree' versus the process now where we're focusing on commonalities and trying to put those pieces together."[174] In addition to the commonalities in the governance process, the parties also recognized they had commonalities in operational aspects. Participant G stated, "If we're having the same issues, then why can't we work together and try to pull this thing back together?"[175] As the commonalities were emphasized in the governance development process and operational aspects, the parties were able to move forward with the process to achieve success.

Additionally, time has been a factor in allowing both parties to observe that they are operating in a comparable fashion to each other, despite the significant

[173] The complete Phoenix RWC governance document is available for review at http://rwcaz.org/webdocs/misc/rwc-governance.pdf and the Mesa TRWC governance document is available for review at http://www.topazrwc.org/pdf/3-19-12/GovernanceAgreement2012.pdf.

[174] Interview with Participant A, November 17, 2014.

[175] Interview with Participant G, December 11, 2014.

disagreements in phase II over control and authority. Participant F stated, "They've [TRWC] had time to actually see our [RWC] behavior, so maybe that level of trust has increased some so that, you know, immediately after implementation [meaning after the RWC governance system was implemented] it was scary, whereas now maybe it's not so scary."[176] Time has been helpful with providing awareness on commonalities and diminishing differences.

### *b. Discussion*

Participants in a process must sustain a free flow of information and understand each other's needs and objectives. In order to achieve this, participants may need to use a different frame of reference.[177] Participants in a governance development process may achieve this level of reference or clarity by emphasizing the commonalities between the parties and minimizing the differences.

Identifying and emphasizing commonalities may also help parties understand and satisfy each other's interests. Identifying interests is a critical step in the process of integrative bargaining. Interests are the underlying concerns, needs, desires, or fears that motivate a party to take a particular position.[178] Fisher, Ury, and Patton stressed that understanding each other's interests will permit the parties to invent solutions that meet each other's interests.[179]

Phase II was characterized by the parties focusing on the differences between the groups that led to conflict and disagreement over how to best resolve them. This focus on disagreement limited the ability of the parties to clearly identify those interests and work to address them. In phase III, the parties began their process by seeking to understand where the commonalities existed

[176] Interview with Participant F, November 26, 2014.

[177] Lewicki et al., *Negotiation*, 74·

[178] Ibid., 79.

[179] Fisher et al., *Getting to Yes*, 40.

between the parties before identifying differences. This initial review began the process by demonstrating to the parties how closely aligned they were in terms of interests and how few barriers actually existed to successfully address each other's needs.

The effort to identify commonalities also led to a more complete understanding of interests. As the interests were identified, the parties involved in the process were able to invent solutions and reach consensus on those issues to satisfy each party. Without the clear identification of interests, the focus may have easily reverted to differences, which would have led to similar circumstances that exhibited themselves in phase II.

The parties also understood the value of joint action. As identified in phase III, the parties had similar operational concerns that could also be addressed by this consolidation process. Time and experience had also demonstrated the commonalities between the two entities. Public value is increased by the parties doing things together instead of doing them alone.[180] This was another interest the parties identified that maintained a focus on commonalities. By stressing the greater goal of achieving a successful governance development process, the parties were able to maintain a focus on commonalities that eventually led to agreement and solutions, rather than conflict and process breakdown, which occurred in earlier phases.[181]

## C. PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

Throughout the course of the study, several characteristics of the participants emerged as important success factors. Participants in the governance development process needed to have the appropriate authority to engage in the process and have proper decision-making authority to make binding agreements. Additionally, a level of experience, knowledge, and

[180] Walter J. M. Kickert et al., *Managing Complex Networks: Strategies for the Public Sector* (London; Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Ltd, 1997), 40.

[181] Lewicki et al., *Negotiation*, 74.

organizational learning was a critical component for the participants to acquire to move from unsuccessful to successful governance development.

### 1. Authority

When the focus of an initiative is operationally based or strictly service delivery, high-level decision-making authority may not be required. As governance development processes become increasingly complex and shift from operations to policy making, however, participants must be granted sufficient authority to make organizational-level decisions. Engaging higher-level authorities also ensures that the appropriate direction is established to guide the governance development process. It also enables more effective discussions to occur directly, without the engagement of multiple levels of personnel involved in the process that may not be appropriate for high-level discussions.

#### *a. Results*

Participants in phase I were given informal operational authority. They were able to make decisions related to how the system would operate and make the necessary changes. They were not given, however, authority to make policy or administratively binding decisions. Participant A discussed the differences from phase I to phase III: "The level of participants was probably a step down from what it is today."[182]

Phase II began by including additional members who had more authority to make decisions on behalf of their organization but not of an appropriate authority level to make binding agreements on behalf of jurisdictions or cities. While issues of ownership and control continued to be controversial topics, a communications breakdown occurred between the participants in this phase. Participant A noted some of the successes in phase II. He stated, "while the negotiations and putting together the governance language went very well and we certainly had capable people, but there wasn't anybody in the room doing that

[182] Interview with Participant A, November 17, 2014.

that had the authority to make those decisions."[183] The contentious topics involved the relinquishment of some authority on behalf of organizations that were beyond the scope of many of the participants in the process. This authority was viewed as a finite resource that became a highly debatable topic among the governance team in phase II.

When these individuals attempted to engage their senior leaders and policy makers, they realized that the engagement occurred too late in the process. As policy makers were brought into the decision-making process, they were asked to make decisions based on limited knowledge and with very little context as to how the issue had escalated to its current state. Interviewees commented that the decisions being made by executive-level personnel late in the process were done without the full operational impact of the decision being realized.

The late intervention in phase II by those with sufficient authority to make binding decisions ultimately resulted in impasse in the discussions. Controversial letters (referred to by some as "ultimatums") were exchanged between the City of Phoenix and the City of Mesa. See Appendix C and D for copies of these letters issued by the management of each entity. As Participant F noted, the involvement of senior officials later in the process seemed helpful initially, but eventually led to impasse. He stated, "So you'd get the high-level folks together and everybody would leave and it would seem that we had reached an agreement, but it never happened and that's why the 'letter,' the 'ultimatum,' as it is called finally came out."[184]

In phase III, the agencies appointed senior-level policy makers to staff the governance working group to develop a single comprehensive governance process. Operational-level personnel were used in the process, but only as subject matter experts or for informational guidance rather than being put in an

[183] Interview with Participant A, November 17, 2014.

[184] Interview with Participant F, November 26, 2014.

authoritative role or decision-making policy role. Executive leaders engaged in phase III set the tone for the process and had sufficient authority to make binding decisions on behalf of their respective organizations. This level of authority allowed the participants to achieve successful outcomes based on their ability to make immediate decisions without having to confer with senior leaders, improving the efficiency of the process. Several participants noted the need to engage those with appropriate authority early in the process. Participant F stated, "Get the right people involved up front at the right level."[185] Additionally, authority was viewed as something that could be shared amongst all participants rather than a finite resource that was a cause of disagreement in earlier phases.

Finally, a champion or group of champions was needed to move this process forward. The individuals engaged in phase III were from diverse backgrounds and with extensive authority and experience to move the process forward. An executive with appropriate authority was needed to drive the process. A city manager involved in the process noted, "I'm not going to tell you how to do it, but I'm going to tell you what the outcome ought to look like and you figure out [what] the best path to get there is and that's just the way I do business."[186] The executive leadership set the tone for the process and established the appropriate team to lead the governance development process and champion the direction for achieving success.

### *b. Discussion*

In phase I, participants were provided with the authority to make operational and technical decisions. This operational authority was limited to those aspects of system operation but did not include any authority to make or implement policy. At the time, the limited authority was not a hindrance to the process since most of the decisions did not involve policy-level issues.

[185] Interview with Participant F, November 26, 2014.

[186] Interview with Participant C, November 21, 2014.

Once the process evolved to attempting to formalize the governance development process, retaining the same level of participation in the process provided insufficient to allow policy decisions to be made and developed. As Hocevar, Jansen, and Thomas discussed in their Inter-Organizational Collaborative Capacity (ICC) Model, insufficient authority from participants and a lack of formal roles or procedures for managing collaboration are detrimental to the collaborative process.[187] In phase II, the participants did not have the authority to make binding decisions, which became a barrier to success.

The participants in phase II realized that the issues and concerns that became contentious discussion points needed to be elevated to a higher-level authority for resolution. When these policy makers were brought into the process, they were only given narrow information on which to base their decisions. This limited engagement late in the process resulted in a series of letters being sent between city managers that led to impasse and dissolution of the process. Additionally, these letters later became the basis for many years of damaged relationships and limited communication and information sharing between the two parties (distrust). This is detailed under Hocevar, Jansen, and Thomas' lateral mechanisms of their ICC Model as a barrier factor that limits interorganizational collaboration, as occurred in this case.[188]

Once sufficient authority was established and engaged in phase III, the governance development process began to experience a series of successes due this level of involvement. Operational personnel were utilized as needed, but were not given the sole responsibility for decision making beyond their scope. This executive leadership established the appropriate environment to foster interorganizational collaboration by establishing the appropriate authority of participants, effective communications and information exchange, and appropriate leadership support and commitment from top-level executives. Many

[187] Susan Page Hocevar, Erik Jansen, and Gail Fann Thomas, "Building Collaborative Capacity: An Innovative Strategy for Homeland Security Preparedness," *Advances in Interdisciplinary Studies of Work Teams* 12 (2006): 260.

[188] Ibid.

exchange mechanisms tend to be social and based on relationships. Formal authority, however, is necessary to allow effective and successful decision making to occur in the process.[189] This support has fostered increased collaboration and a successful governance development process with appropriate authority engaged for decision making.

### 2. Experience/Knowledge/Learning

Participants from an operational background were initially the primary parties involved in the governance development process. Their experience and knowledge of policy-making processes was limited and affected their ability to successfully complete the effort. As individuals with more experience and knowledge were engaged in the process, the efforts were more successful. Additionally, having historical knowledge of the prior efforts allowed for the organization and individuals to learn from prior efforts to capitalize on both success and failure in the later phase to produce positive results.

#### *a. Results*

In phase I, the participants involved in the governance development process were from highly technical and operational backgrounds. Their experience and knowledge was primarily concentrated on the design, building, implementation, and operation of the wireless communications network. The participants in phase I had extensive public administration experience, but most were not specifically trained or knowledgeable with high-level policy making.

In phase II, many of those same participants engaged in the governance development process. The only experience they had to draw upon was their prior efforts, which were informal and offered little practical experience or knowledge. During phase II, a consultant was brought in as an objective third party to attempt to provide some direction and guidance in the governance development process. The consultant had extensive experience with several communications

[189] Walter W. Powell, "Neither Market nor Hierarchy: Network Forms of Organization," *Research in Organizational Behavior* 12 (1990): 295–336.

technology projects across the nation. They had been used earlier in the design, development, and implementation of the system. Their skillset, however, was more specifically focused on project management and technical guidance, not necessarily governance development processes.[190]

The consultant did seek out other governance systems and offered information during phase II as to what models might be emulated or further examined for consideration. Despite the availability of other models from across the nation, the situation in this region was so unique that no single model could be easily applied and matched, which complicated the process. Additionally, some of the new participants involved in the formalization of the governance development process in phase II were of a higher-level role and had some additional limited experience with negotiations and other similar governance processes, which was helpful.

Participants interviewed noted that while experience was limited among the participants, there was a learning process that occurred during the years of discussion that provided some support in the process. Participant A stated that the process was “a learning process” and “there was a learning element” that occurred in this phase.[191] In phase II, the City of Mesa brought in a member of the city’s water department who had prior experience with another governance initiative in the region to offer some assistance. The support provided related to governance structure, procedures, protocols, and operational processes. The effort was to assist the group in phase II with overcoming some of their contentious issues by analyzing how another governance initiative successfully addressed them. This participation by a third party was described as “very helpful” with using outside experience and knowledge to help further the process during phase II.[192] While phase II resulted in a failure of the process, this

[190] The company who assisted in this process was Buford Goff & Associates, Inc. (BGA) from Columbia, South Carolina, http://www.bgainc.com/.

[191] Interview with Participant A, November 17, 2014.

[192] Ibid.

additional engagement by experienced parties was viewed as helpful and beneficial to the process, despite the result.

Phase III was characterized by advances in the evolution of the governance development process due to the experience of the participants selected to lead the process. The prior knowledge and experience from the past phases was a critical factor in allowing the process to advance more quickly. Participant G stated having "that knowledge of that [the prior phases] has helped us move a little bit quicker through the process."[193] He also stated that the knowledge and experience in this phase had "to be learned, earned, and, you know, ultimately developed through the process."[194]

While having more experienced professionals assigned to the team handling the governance development process is critical to the success, participants noted that time has also been beneficial to the process. The passage of time has been advantageous to allow all parties to gain additional knowledge and experience, but it also allowed trust to increase. Participant F noted on the process, "They've had time to actually see our behavior, so maybe that level of trust has increased some."[195] Several participants stated that time has allowed the level of knowledge to increase and prior experiences to help guide the actions of the team engaged in phase III.

Some of the interviewees felt that a level of failure needed to occur to establish a path for success in future efforts. Participant A claimed, "Some of that process needed to occur [prior efforts, failures, etc.]." In addition, "the failure that happened here I believe was a learning experience."[196] As a member of the governance development team in phase III, one of the participants said, "I think progress would be stifled if we didn't learn from our experiences. I think progress would be hard to come by if we didn't use history to help guide us for the

[193] Interview with Participant G, December 11, 2014.

[194] Ibid.

[195] Interview with Participant F, November 26, 2014.

[196] Interview with Participant A, November 17, 2014.

future."[197] The governance team in phase III initially reviewed the prior efforts of phase I and II to ascertain what mistakes led to dissention to either avoid those same faults, or make concerted efforts to ensure that they were properly addressed moving forward. It is not clear from the participants if the mistakes had to occur to achieve success in phase III. The interviewees, however, acknowledged that by taking time to review and learn from them they were able to capitalize on them and progress forward more rapidly and successfully.

### *b. Discussion*

Phase I participants were not experienced enough to make high-level policy decisions required as part of developing a comprehensive governance process. During this phase, however, that level of knowledge or experience was not required. The focus at the time was operational and technical, not policy. Once the process evolved to phase II where the objective was development of formalized governance processes and documentation, the value of having knowledgeable and experienced participants was more critical. Phase I was not particularly helpful with developing extensive prior experience for the participants, yet those same individuals were tasked with participating in the efforts of phase II. As the process progressed in phase II, participants found value by adding personnel with supplementary knowledge and experience. The third parties added to the process focused on providing specific expertise.

The hired consultant provided comparative analysis on structure and operations of other similar governance processes from across the nation. The water department representative brought expertise regarding how their prior governance processes addressed structure, procedures, protocols, and operational processes. The efforts of both a consultant and third party with relevant experience to provide an external perspective were beneficial to closing the knowledge gap that existed with the team when they began discussions in phase II. These efforts focused on specific issues that the team was addressing

[197] Interview with Participant G, December 11, 2014.

in phase II. There was still a lack of focus, however, on strategy and vision and more attention on the mechanics of governance. The third parties were helpful, but focus was not on the overarching issues causing the divisiveness, which led to the failure of the process.

In phase III, individuals who were leaders within their respective organizations and more experienced were brought onto the team. These individuals drew on lessons from the past to capture both successes and failures of the prior phases to close the knowledge gap and progress forward. They were able to detect and correct some of the errors of the past, which led to organizational and instrumental learning. They did not dwell, however, on past failures but took advantage of them to learn and provide inquiry into the dynamics of the process. Chris Argyris posited that with "instrumental learning, organizational inquiry yields new ways of thinking and acting that enable the improved performance of an organizational task."[198] Participants claimed that the prior phases and organizational learning that occurred have contributed to the success in phase III and new organizational perspectives being established.

This level of prior engagement has led the individuals participating in the process, as well as the organizations, to gain valuable insight from prior phases. Small and incremental changes in chaotic systems can also lead to unexpectedly large fluctuations in results.[199] A change in the leadership team with the right knowledge, experience, and appropriate historical context had a major impact on the outcome of the process, as was experienced in the results from phase II to phase III.

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[198] Chris Argyris, *Organizational Learning II: Theory, Method, and Practice* (Reading, MA: FT Press, 1995), 33.

[199] Robert Macintosh et al., *Complexity and Organization: Readings and Conversations*, 1st ed. (London: New York: Routledge, 2006), 15.

## D. ORGANIZATIONAL COLLABORATIVE CAPACITY

Organizations increasingly operate in complex environments that involve multiple participants from diverse backgrounds and disciplines. The ability to foster and sustain collaborative efforts is essential to long-term success. Throughout the three phases of this study, a series of driving forces that created a condition for collaboration were present during successful efforts, while a series of restraining forces were present during unsuccessful efforts. Organizational collaborative capacity is important as decision making and task interdependence increase, as occurred in this study.

### 1. Results

In phase I, the participants shared a felt need to collaborate and understood the value of doing things together. The parties were able to accomplish more by sharing a common goal of improving public safety communications in the region. Participant F stated that the goal of improving public safety operations "was the main vision and I don't think anybody ever lost sight of that."[200]

While there was no formalized structure in place, collaboration among the parties was high. There was a willingness to compromise and collaborate to achieve their objectives in phase I. The parties also shared a common incentive to collaborate for future HSGP funding opportunities. As the City of Tempe was the recipient of a grant, that became an incentive to enhance the collaborative efforts and to formalize the governance development process.

Phase II was staffed heavily with operational personnel involved in the discussions. The level of authority of the participants also led to an issue of territoriality where many of the participants engaged in the process focused on protecting their own interests, rather than moving the process forward. Participant E stated that phase II was clearly operating in a competitive mode; he

[200] Interview with Participant F, November 26, 2014.

noted about the entire process, “I think they were competing. I absolutely think they were competing.”[201] He also commented on the issue of territoriality saying, “I think there was a lot at stake and people were feeling as though their ground was being, you know, trampled on and what some sort of merging could do to their jobs, their livelihood, to everything.”[202]

While there was more structure in place for phase II than was present in phase I, the final decision makers were not immediately engaged in the process, which was a failure of the structure. There was a lack of formal roles or procedures for maintaining collaboration, the group size was too large to be effective, and there was a competition for resources and territory. Participant E also stated that the process in phase II could have been more successful with the right individuals present. He stated, “I think with the right people it [successful governance] could have been achieved previously.”[203]

Phase III began with a commitment by the organizations participating to provide the appropriate level of leadership to achieve a successful outcome. There was a vision and common goal established to achieve a successful governance process from top leadership. Participant D stressed the importance of outreach and communication with top administrators. During an information sharing session in phase III he noted they had “17 police chiefs and their command level people there.”[204] This level of engagement was important to foster support and commitment from the top of the respective stakeholder organizations. As the agencies invested in this process, they committed to an effective exchange of ideas and information to improve the process.

As phase III continued, the participants gained an appreciation for each other’s views and perspectives, which led to trust being established. Participant C discussed trust during this process stating, “I respect you as an individual, I

[201] Interview with Participant E, November 25, 2014.

[202] Interview with Participant E, November 25, 2014.

[203] Ibid.

[204] Interview with Participant D, November 24, 2014.

respect your leadership ability, and I trust you to always act, you know, in accordance. And so building the trust with the parties that are open to building a relationship properly."[205] This trust further fostered collaborative efforts among the participating individuals and built stronger relationships. These same individuals shared a common commitment to seeing the process through to completion, regardless of the disputes or issues that arose during the process.

This commitment to participation and completion of the governance process was critical in building relationships among the participants. Participant B stated, "there has just got to be a commitment by both parties to continue to keep that relationship moving forward to make it strong."[206] Additionally, this commitment "keeps the conversation moving forward."[207] In earlier discussions, technology was a driving factor with effective interoperable communications. Participant A stated that as systems have evolved and technology improved, there is a need to focus more on the aspects of relationships rather than technology. He noted, "We focus on technology, but technology is only a small piece of relationships."[208] As he spoke of relationships, Participant A also said, "let's see what we can agree on and then we'll tackle the stuff we can't."[209] The building and fostering of trust and establishing strong relationships was critical to the ability to reach compromises and move processes forward to build collaborative capacity.

### 2. Discussion

The benefits of developing collaborative capabilities include cost savings through the transfer of smart practices, better decision making because of advice and information obtained from colleagues, enhanced capacity for collective action by dispersed units, and innovation through the cross-pollination of ideas

[205] Interview with Participant C, November 21, 2014.

[206] Interview with Participant B, November 18, 2014.

[207] Ibid.

[208] Interview with Participant A, November 17, 2014.

[209] Ibid.

and recombination of scarce resources.[210] Phase I was characterized by a focus on a "felt need" to collaborate and the sharing of a common goal of achieving interoperable communications. This is defined as a "success factor" in Hocevar, Jansen, and Thomas' ICC Model in the purpose and strategy organization design component.[211] While there was no formalized coordination or structure in place for phase I, the groups managed to operate successfully despite this being a "barrier factor" in the ICC Model.[212] The participants were able to overcome this barrier by focusing on the purpose and strategy they set forth early in the process.

Phase II exhibited many of the "barrier factors" detailed in the ICC Model. Under purpose and strategy, the parties focused on their own local agency over cross-agency concerns. The debate over authority and control focused on singular agency needs, rather than cross-agency requirements. This led to a lack of goal clarity that eventually resulted in a failure of the process. The structure of phase II also demonstrated a failure to include participants of an adequate level of authority to achieve collaboration. With the lower-level participants in place, there was a lack of accountability and no formal roles or procedures established for managing collaboration. As the parties took positions and moved from interest-based discussions to focus on positions, there was inadequate communication and information sharing, which created distrust among the participants. In the ICC Model, these are "barrier factors" in lateral mechanisms of the organization design component.[213]

As the participants focused on their own territorial issues, this led to a competition for resources. Specifically, competition for control, authority, and

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[210] Morten T. Hansen and Nitin Nohria, "How To Build Collaborative Advantage," *MIT Sloan Management Review* 46, no. 1 (Fall 2004): 22–30.

[211] Hocevar, Jansen, and Thomas, "Building Collaborative Capacity: An Innovative Strategy for Homeland Security Preparedness," 260.

[212] Hocevar, Jansen, and Thomas, "Building Collaborative Capacity for Homeland Security," 33.

[213] Hocevar, Jansen, and Thomas, "Building Collaborative Capacity: An Innovative Strategy for Homeland Security Preparedness," 260.

power, which was another barrier to successful collaboration during the phase II discussions. Finally, in phase II there was a lack of appreciation for the perspectives of others, which eroded the trust and led to a lack of commitment and motivation to endure the challenges that arose and eventually led to a complete impasse in the governance development process. Phase II exhibited a number of "barrier factors" in the ICC Model that describe the lack of success and relatively low level of collaboration occurring during this phase.[214]

Phase III demonstrated a shift from "barrier" to "success" factors listed in the ICC Model. The participants in phase III continued to share the "felt need" to collaborate, shared common goals, recognized the interdependence among the interested parties, and were adaptable to interests of other organizations.[215] The purpose and strategy of the participants in phase III were aligned with achieving a high level of collaborative capacity.

The structure of phase III favored a model of formalized coordination with established roles and procedures for managing collaboration. Additionally, the level of participant engaged in phase III was of sufficient authority to make requisite decisions. Not only did this increase accountability of those participating, their involvement also provided for the appropriate resources for effective collaboration to occur. Once again, the shift from phase II to phase III included the appropriate movement from "barrier" to "success" factors identified in the structure component of the ICC Model.[216]

In phase III, there was significant leadership support and commitment. Organizations committed to the success of the process by providing appropriate policy-level participants and engaging in the process. This shared collaboration reduced the competitive rivalries that were present in phase II. Each organization acknowledged the benefits of the collaborative efforts, realized that sharing of

[214] Hocevar, Jansen, and Thomas, "Building Collaborative Capacity: An Innovative Strategy for Homeland Security Preparedness," 260.

[215] Ibid.

[216] Ibid.

resources was not only fiscally responsible but also improved public safety operations leading back to the common goal, and recognized interdependence. The issues surrounding territoriality were reduced and the spirit of mutual respect and trust were established. In phase III, there was a movement from apathy of not being concerned with outcome to an attitude of success as being the only acceptable outcome of the process. These incentives were "success" factors in the process that were not present in phase II.

Finally, the people aspect of the ICC Model was a critical component for the success experienced in phase III. The team assigned in phase III worked diligently to understand and appreciate each other's perspectives. This formed a culture of trust among the participants and in turn, the organizations they represented. These individuals also shared a common commitment and motivation to develop a successful collaborative governance development process that avoided the prior efforts.[217]

When the governance process began in phase I, collaboration was occurring but the level of collaborative capacity was not high. There is consensus among the participants that the process worked in phase I, but as witnessed by the transition to phase II, was not sufficient to sustain itself as more institutional (versus operational) issues needed to be addressed. Phase II was characterized by several "barrier" factors identified in the ICC Model under purpose and strategy, structure, lateral mechanisms, incentives, and people.[218]

Phase III efforts demonstrated many of the "success" factors identified in the ICC Model. The participants and organizations in phase III enhanced their collaborative capacity by employing factors that allowed for greater success. Participants acknowledged their efforts in phase III were successful, but noted there was no specific model or particular guidance they were emulating. Once

[217] Hocevar, Jansen, and Thomas, "Building Collaborative Capacity: An Innovative Strategy for Homeland Security Preparedness," 260.

[218] Thomas, Hocevar, and Jansen, "A Diagnostic Approach to Building Collaborative Capacity in an Interagency Context," 7.

the participants shifted from those “barrier” to “success” factors (even though not intentionally) they began to experience greater success, increased trust, and enhanced collaborative capacity. The ability to focus early in the process on those factors affecting interorganizational collaboration appears to be critical to success in the governance development process.

## E. PROCESSES

During the interviews with participants and throughout the course of the study, several processes to governance development emerged as important factors for success. Two factors were particularly significant in the findings: negotiation and conflict management. While organizations and participants engaged with the establishment of governance, they sought agreement on several areas of opposing interest. This presented opportunities for negotiation techniques to become factors in the process. Additionally, negotiation efforts provoked conflict among the organizations that needed to be managed. Conflict managed improperly led to a breakdown of the process and damaged relationships in the governance development process. Conflict managed effectively produced successful outcomes.

### 1. Negotiation

Negotiation occurs when two or more parties seek to reach agreement and resolve opposing interests. When parties focus on positions and not interests, their negotiation strategies revolve around distributive processes where the belief is there can only be a single winner in the discussion. This leads to ineffective solution development and often a breakdown in the process. As the parties shift focus to interests, and not positions, the movement towards integrative negotiations occurs where win/win outcomes are sought to reduce competition and allow for collaboration to occur.

### *a. Results*

Phase I represented a bilateral relationship between the City of Phoenix and the City of Mesa. This bilateral relationship was important since only two parties were involved in the discussion. As the process evolved, more parties became engaged with attempting to formalize the process, making negotiations much more difficult. These two entities had a positive working relationship with each other due to this one-on-one interaction. There was still a lack of trust between the entities, however. Participant E stated that while the parties were working well, "I think there was some lack of trust possibly between the two entities, both thinking—you know, 800 pound gorillas."[219]

The process in phase II was initially built on trust and cooperation. Participant A stated, "The communication directors and the engineers from Mesa and Phoenix were able to build this whole thing out of a whole platform of trust and cooperation. When we came down to governance, we lost it."[220] The participants had a positive relationship to the point when phase II began and even through the early stages of the phase. As the process reached the point in the negotiations where issues surrounding trust, control, and legal concerns became the focus of the discussions, however, the process began to falter.

As the negotiations between the parties continued to revolve around several critical issues, the process became a power struggle between the entities over these perceived finite resources. Participant D noted, "When they started to do the negotiation, it started moving towards assertiveness and competing and a power struggle…a bit to the breaking point."[221] In phase II, the parties viewed compromise as a win/lose proposition. Participant F stated, "It was truly zero sum, win/lose. I'm going to get it and you're not, or I get the control and you don't get the control."[222] The parties reached high levels of conflict over these issues

[219] Interview with Participant E, November 25, 2014.

[220] Interview with Participant A, November 17, 2014.

[221] Interview with Participant D, November 24, 2014.

[222] Interview with Participant F, November 26, 2014.

during the negotiation process in phase II. There eventually was impasse where no further progress was being achieved. As discussed in earlier results, an eventual ultimatum was issued that ended the process. Participant F talked about the letter saying, “I think it came across, unfortunately, too negatively. It was very negative. That ultimatum was very negative.”[223] Phoenix intended this letter as a notice to Mesa that the current discussions were not achieving the desired outcome of establishing a successful governance process. It was not intended as an ultimatum, but a suggestion that a new course of action should be pursued.

Mesa, however, took this as a negative statement in the form of an ultimatum of there being no further room to negotiate or that it was suggested the system proceed with two independent structures. Participant A said, “You know, when the ultimatum came down, rather than maybe a suggestion for a different direction, when it came down as an ultimatum it stopped the process.”[224] While there was debate between Phoenix and Mesa over the actual intent, the result was a complete breakdown of the negotiation process.

Phase III was characterized by the need to reestablish relationships and build the trust that was eroded as a result of how phase II ended many years prior. Early in the process, there was an effort to define the procedures of the negotiation process to establish the rules of conduct and seek to reestablish trust. Rather than a focus on what was or was not possible, the team committed to open and honest communications and during the negotiation process, as Participant E stated, “Everything was an option.”[225] In addition, he also discussed the role of trust in negotiations, stating “…but I’m talking about trust just within this group. I know that early on in the process, and this was one of our, you know, rules of engagement, and that was the elephant in the corner. There will be no elephants. If you are thinking it, say it.”[226] The commitment to

[223] Interview with Participant F, November 26, 2014.

[224] Interview with Participant A, November 17, 2014.

[225] Interview with Participant E, November 25, 2014.

[226] Ibid.

possibilities and open and honest communications facilitated the repair of the previously damaged relationships.

With more options, the focus of phase III shifted to win/win opportunities. Participant A was involved in the prior phases, and he noted that if compromise or win/win focus does not occur, "We'll fail again—if it doesn't occur, we will fail again."[227] Participant E is the chair of the governance working group in phase III. He discussed the win/win option as, "instead of A or B, maybe there's another option that we both get something out of it versus you have to walk away a loser and I have to walk away the winner."[228]

In addition to achieving win/win negotiated outcomes, the team in phase III also ensured the focus was on interests and not positions. In phase II, the process broke down when each party held to their position regarding authority and control. There was no discussion of understanding the underlying interest, which led to impasse. In phase III, there was a movement from win/lose to win/win. As the parties moved to interest-based negotiations, Participant G said, "I'd rather call it solution development versus problem solving."[229] The failed negotiations of the past were not dwelled upon. The team used the historical context of the prior negotiations to learn about those issues that caused the process to fail, but focused their efforts on future success rather than past failure. Participant G stated, "We use reference points of what broke down in the past, but not use that as a mechanism to try and come up with future solutions."[230]

### *b. Discussion*

Phase I was not characteristic of a negotiation situation in that there was no conflict of needs between two or more parties. Phase I was described as working well with relatively little need for negotiation processes to occur given the

[227] Interview with Participant A, November 17, 2014.

[228] Interview with Participant E, November 25, 2014.

[229] Interview with Participant G, December 11, 2014.

[230] Ibid.

bilateral relationship and operational focus, which made agreement easier to achieve with the relatively uncontentious issues at the time. Once efforts to formalize the governance development process began to occur and critical issues and topics arose, however, the need for negotiations became necessary.

In phase I, the parties sensed a need to work together and they felt that the possible outcome is better than they could achieve alone. During the progression of phase II, it became apparent that the parties lost the perception they needed each other, which compromised the negotiations. The discussion in phase II focused on win/lose propositions and the parties engaged in distributive bargaining. These zero-sum situations (or distributive situations) are ones in which there can be only one winner or where the parties are attempting to get a larger share or piece of a fixed resource.[231] Intergroup disputes became intense as each organization attempted to negotiate for control and authority. Intergroup conflict occurs between organizations as well. Conflict at this level of a negotiation process is very complex and quite intricate because of the large number of people involved and the many ways they can interact with each other.[232] In phase II, the parties focused on their positions in an attempt to garner a larger piece of the fixed resource. This led to a focus on positions rather than interests. The issue in phase II over control and emphasis on distributive bargaining is a classic example of negotiating over positions and failing to understand underlying interests.[233]

As the focus was only on win/lose scenarios, the process eventually reached impasse. This may be defined as difficult-to-resolve negotiations and as a condition or state of conflict in which there is no apparent quick or easy resolution.[234] The parties in phase II both reached a point where there would be no perceived winner and each chose to cease negotiations. The chances of

[231] Lewicki et al., *Negotiation*, 15.

[232] Ibid., 18.

[233] Ibid., 79.

[234] Ibid., 475.

impasse increase when parties are unorganized, the social system from which the parties evolve is ill defined, there are fundamental value differences on key issues, and the conflict repeatedly escalates.[235]

In phase II, all of these variables appeared to be occurring, which eventually resulted in impasse. Mesa felt that the response to the negotiations by Phoenix was not an appropriate response to this situation. Barbara Gray suggested that another reason negotiations reach impasse is that the parties negotiating allow their emotions to determine their reaction to the other party rather than responding in a measured way to the situation.[236] Based on the letters and resulting damaged relationships, this was the case in phase II. It was also viewed that Mesa responded to Phoenix's tactics in kind, which escalated the conflict to the point of complete process failure.

Phase III participants began by seeking to establish mutual trust and respect. Clear rules of engagement were defined before any negotiations were to occur, which set the stage for reaching consensus or engagement with healthy dialogue over issues requiring negotiation. The team involved in phase III moved from distributive bargaining tactics to integrative negotiation methods. When discussing the fact that everything was now an option, the parties were attempting to find solutions so both parties could do well and achieve their respective goals.[237] The efforts of phase III moved away from win/lose to win/win outcomes so both parties could achieve mutual gain and move the process forward.

The team in phase III also sought to understand problems fully. Instead of a focus on a particular position, which was the failure of phase II, the team sought to identify and understand each other's interests. Understanding interests permitted them to invent solutions that would meet each other's needs and

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[235] Ibid., 477.

[236] Lewicki et al., *Negotiation*, 483.

[237] Ibid., 15.

achieve successful outcomes.[238] Phase III also shifted the focus from substantive interests to relationship interests. In phase II, the discussion was on substantive interests, which led to anger over the situation and disagreement over the solution to the problem. Phase III, however, moved this process to relationship interests. The team negotiating focused on maintaining positive relationships between the parties, which allowed them to deal directly with the concerns in a measured and harmonious manner.[239]

Phase III also followed a more strategic method of negotiating. As Watkins discussed in his model, structure and strategy are directly related to processes and eventually outcomes.[240] The team in phase III established a structure and strategy to follow during their negotiations that emphasized the need to define those aspects of the issue before moving to the process or outcome. This was in direct conflict with the focus on phase II, where the team attempted to seek outcomes before developing any form of structure or strategy. As Watkins' model describes, the dimensions of the negotiation process are linked together and understanding the elements of a successful negotiation process can assist with enhancing structure and shaping strategy.

Phase III was characterized by more structure and strategy being defined early in the process before issues being negotiated reached a critical level. This structure and strategy allowed successful negotiation to occur to seek integrative solutions that ultimately resulted in both parties walking away winners, avoiding impasse and the damaged relationships that occurred in phase II. The strategies in phase III followed many established successful negotiation processes that were absent in earlier phases. This attention to these successful negotiation strategies has resulted in successful discussions and mutual agreement while maintaining positive relationships built on mutual respect and trust.

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[238] Ibid., 79.

[239] Fisher et al., *Getting to Yes*, 20.

[240] Watkins, "Analyzing Complex Negotiations," 1.

### 2. Conflict Management

When conflict is productively managed, cooperation and collaboration are high. When conflict is not productively managed, this often leads to a deterioration of trust or a breakdown in the collaborative process. When parties focus only on their own needs, their level of assertiveness becomes high and cooperation low. This often leads to competition and avoidance, which is detrimental to the governance development process. Agencies that seek to focus on the interests of others and establishment of relationships often move towards compromise and collaboration. Throughout the course of the three phases, as efforts shifted from distributive to integrative processes, conflict was effectively managed to produce collaborative processes and successful outcomes.

#### *a. Results*

Phase I of the process operated in a manner where the parties experienced relatively low levels of conflict. It was often described as operating successfully with no conflict between the parties. Communication between the groups was well established, there was a free flow of information, and concerns were quickly expressed and addressed effectively. When participants were asked about this process using the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI) chart, many of the respondents indicated on the chart that phase I was operating with medium to high levels of cooperativeness between the parties.[241]

Additionally, even though there were indications of low, middle, and high levels of assertiveness, the respondents overwhelmingly stated that phase I discussions were operating by compromising, accommodating, and collaborating. No participants noted any form of competition occurring during phase I. One participant stated there did appear to be some avoidance occurring. More than withdrawing from the situation, however, it was just avoidance of formalizing the governance development process. Figure 7 represents a TKI chart showing

[241] In the TKI, assertiveness is described as a focus on individual needs, desired outcomes, and agendas. For the purposes of this discussion, the author equates distributive power with assertiveness in the TKI.

where the participants indicated that phase I would be placed on this chart at the organizational level. Some participant codes appear more than once since multiple modes were in use during the phase.

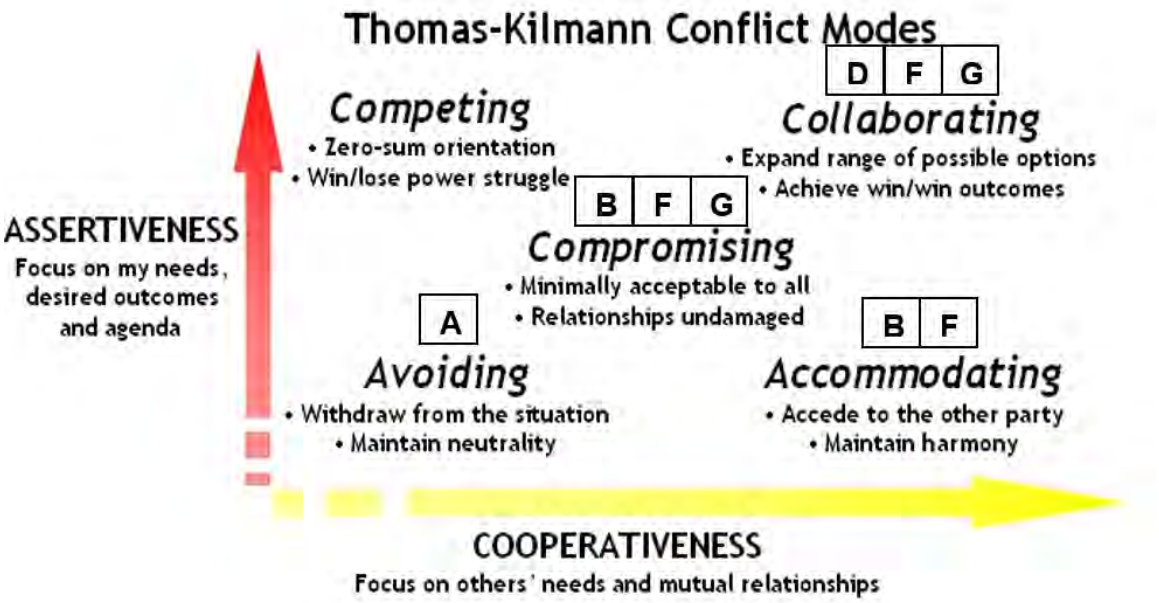


Figure 7. TKI Chart Indicating Participant Placement in Phase I[242]

Initially, phase II began with low levels of conflict as the parties engaged in meaningful discussions and made significant efforts to develop a successful governance development process. Once issues related to trust, control, authority, voting rights, and other legal issues arose, however, the process fell apart. The ultimatum discussed earlier in this chapter also resulted in the increasing conflict between the parties in phase II that stopped the process. When discussing the destructive conflict that occurred in phase II, Participant E responded by saying, "It was spike sticks! There were no sacred cows!"[243] This level of destructive conflict in phase II also resulted in competition between the parties. The conflict resulted from the competitive nature of the discussions centered around win/lose

[242] Adapted from Batista, "Conflict Modes and Managerial Styles."

[243] Interview with Participant E, November 25, 2014.

propositions and perceptions of zero sum outcomes. Participant F stated, “It was truly zero sum, win/lose. I’m going to get it and you’re not, or I get control and you don’t get control.”[244]

There was also unwillingness to compromise, which further increased the competitive nature of phase II. This again was due to the level of participants engaged in the process having a direct stake in the outcome of the process, which made compromise difficult to achieve. Participant F was one of these individuals, and he noted, “You’ve got a real deep stake in it and so when you’re compromising or changing, you feel it more closely. You know, I know I did.”[245]

The need for control of the situation also contributed to the conflict. As the parties attempted to negotiate perceived finite resources, the competition was high for control, which contributed to the high levels of conflict experienced in phase II. This conflict eventually resulted in a complete breakdown among the participants and ultimately, between the organizations. The ultimatum stopped the dialogue completely. When the participants committed to their positions and the conflict increased, the parties began to “dig into their positions,” as Participant C described.[246]

Participants were again asked to indicate on a TKI chart where the organizations were operating during phase II. The respondents indicated that cooperativeness was operating at the lower end of the scale and assertiveness was high. This placed the conflict modes in phase II predominantly in the competing mode. Figure 8 represents a TKI chart showing where the participants indicated that phase II would be placed on this chart at the organizational level. Some participant codes appear more than once since multiple modes were in use during the phase.

[244] Interview with Participant F, November 26, 2014.

[245] Interview with Participant F, November 26, 2014.

[246] Interview with Participant C, November 21, 2014.

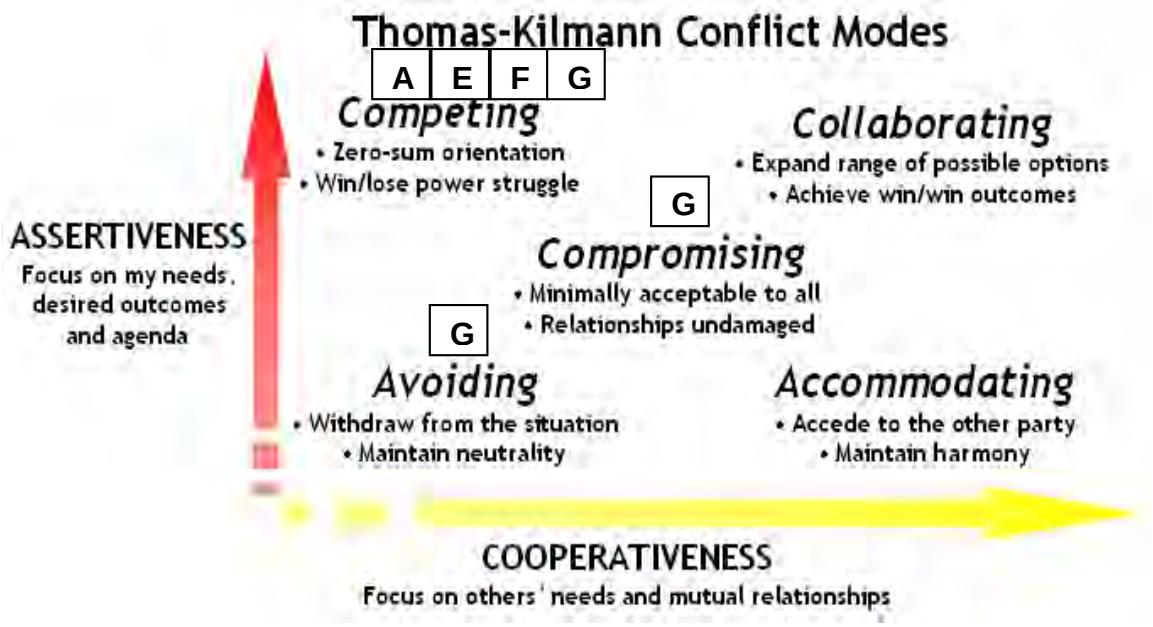


Figure 8. TKI Chart Indicating Participant Placement in Phase II[247]

Phase III was characterized by significantly less conflict among the participants. The process was much more cooperative in nature with parties working through conflict that would arise rather than employing destructive conflict practices. Participant E stated about phase III, "I think we're highly cooperative. I think there are still some accommodating going on to help maintain some harmony, but think that is a natural evolution."[248]

In phase III, the parties also relinquished control, which allowed for competition to decrease and more compromise and collaboration to occur. The participants recognized that without compromise, there would be another potential losing situation or worse, another impasse to discussions. Participant A described the shift from phase I to phase III as, "...to accomplish those goals, you've got to walk into it with an open mind and the ability to compromise and the understanding on both sides that nobody has to give anything up."[249] This moved

[247] Adapted from Batista, "Conflict Modes and Managerial Styles."

[248] Interview with Participant E, November 25, 2014.

[249] Interview with Participant A, November 17, 2014.

the conflict from competitive win/lose zero-sum processes to more win/win situations.

Participants also all discussed the ability in phase III for the parties to collaborate with higher-level involvement. This allowed conflict to be handled at the highest levels with decision and policy makers who were able to expand the range of possibilities in the process when conflict would arise. This higher-level focus was described by Participant A saying, “You’re able to collaborate, because you’re not as focused on, you know, the nuts and bolts of it.”[250] As conflict arose in phase III, the parties were able to compromise and collaborate to address the concern. Participant G stated, “I may have to compromise or do something differently to get to where I need to go.”[251]

Participants were again asked to indicate on a TKI chart where the organizations were operating during phase III. The respondents indicated that cooperativeness was operating at the middle to highest end of the scale. Assertiveness ranged from low, middle, to high throughout the entire phase III process. This placed the conflict modes in phase III in the compromising, accommodating, and collaborating modes. No respondents indicated any type of competition occurring in phase III. All seven participants indicated that phase III was operating in the collaborating mode. Figure 9 represents a TKI chart showing where the participants indicated that phase III would be placed on this chart at the organizational level. Some participant codes appear more than once since multiple modes were in use during the phase.

[250] Interview with Participant A, November 17, 2014.

[251] Interview with Participant G, December 11, 2014.


Figure 9. TKI Chart Indicating Participant Placement in Phase III[252]

### *b. Discussion*

In phase I, the parties involved in the governance development process worked in a collaborative manner to address mutual concerns and address any issues that would arise. This phase was characterized by relatively low levels of conflict. Participants indicated that conflict did not appear to present itself during phase I often, if at all. This allowed the participants to focus on cooperation and continuing to foster mutual relationships. Even though each of the parties experienced assertiveness levels ranging from low and medium to high in phase I, the parties were able to constructively address any such conflict to effectively resolve issues and continue in a collaborative relationship. As the participants noted on the TKI chart for phase I, the ability to effectively address conflict resulted in no competition and high levels of compromising, accommodating, and collaborating.

As phase II evolved, high levels of conflict occurred over a series of issues relating to control and authority. This resulted in conflict among the parties involved in phase II. The parties in phase II did not address this conflict in a

[252] Adapted from Batista, "Conflict Modes and Managerial Styles."

constructive manner. The parties were challenging each other using distributive power tactics to address the conflict. Distributive power occurs when a party attempts to get their way by directing enough power at others to force a compromise or concession of some kind.[253] In addition to the distributive power at play, the parties became skeptical of each other and discussions from the opposite party were often met with suspicion and unambiguous dismissal.[254] This resulted in a significant competition for resources and power.

During phase II, the more assertive method of addressing conflict led to significant competition between the parties. With assertiveness high and cooperativeness low on the TKI chart, the parties engaged in zero-sum processes, win/lose propositions, and significant power struggles. If conflict is not framed constructively, impasse is likely to result, as occurred in phase II.

Phase III was structured to allow conflict to occur, but the governance team provided the mechanism for any conflict to be framed constructively. As conflict arose, the parties involved would address the concern in an honest and forthcoming manner. Difficult issues resulting in conflict were not ignored. This reframing effort also focused on interests and not positions, allowing the team to understand the underlying nature of the conflict to address the concern with options, rather than an immediate escalation of the situation.[255] Participants indicated they were aware that the conflict that occurred in phase II required a different approach to reach consensus and address conflict in a constructive manner for phase III.

Abraham Maslow stated, “I suppose it is tempting, if the only tool you have is a hammer, to treat everything as if it were a nail.”[256] This statement shows that the movement from distributive power (assertiveness) to integrative power

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[253] Mayer, *The Dynamics of Conflict*, 86.

[254] Ibid., 192.

[255] Ibid., 203.

[256] Abraham H. Maslow, *The Psychology of Science: A Reconnaissance* (Chapel Hill, NC: Maurice Bassett, 2002, Originally published 1966),15.

(cooperativeness and assertiveness) allowed for a greater range of options and tools to use to address a concern rather than a single solution to complex issues. In phase III, parties used their power to increase the overall influence of all the parties involved in a dispute or negotiation; they were applying power in an integrative way.[257] This method achieves greater levels of collaboration and expands the possible range of options to address conflict with more tools.

Often, conflict may be handled differently when the environment or structure within which it exists changes, or the individuals involved significantly mature or evolve.[258] The movement from phase II to phase III was an example of changing the structure and the environment with a focus on using integrative power versus distributive power to address conflict. Rather than immediately responding with hard power, the participants in phase III sought to understand the level in which disputes were occurring to address the issues constructively.

All of the participants in phase III unanimously agreed that the parties were operating at the collaborating mode of the TKI. This finding is significant in that this is the only result that was unanimous among the seven interview participants. The conflict management process established in phase III allowed conflict to occur, but rather than focusing on win/lose or zero-sum orientations, all possible options were considered to achieve win/win outcomes and mitigate conflict to allow collaboration to occur. Phase III exhibited a shift from phase II by progressing along the TKI from narrow interests to more inclusive interests.[259] This migration along the TKI occurred among the participants as part of their effort to structure their conflict management processes to be more constructive, which has ultimately led to successful collaboration that was not present in phase II.

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[257] Mayer, *The Dynamics of Conflict*, 86.

[258] Ibid., 170.

[259] Thomas, “Conflict and Conflict Management,” 270.

While phase I exhibited some collaboration, with the absence of conflict it is difficult to determine how effective that informal process may have been with conflict management should a significant disagreement have occurred. Phase III demonstrates, however, the value of focusing on the needs of others, maintaining mutual relationships, and focusing on the needs of both parties to achieve high levels of collaboration as identified in the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument.[260]

## F. MISCELLANEOUS

Other various topics emerged from the case analysis. The factors described below were not of a significant enough nature to warrant separate analysis. They are presented in this section, however, due to the value they may provide in the overall comparative case analysis. They include: timing of the governance process, employee organization engagement, importance of a "champion" for the cause, changing operational conditions, and legal factors.

### 1. Results

Phase I experienced a number of triggering events that began the movement from phase I to phase II. While there was a vision of adding more partners, the funding that allowed an additional member to consider joining the network proved to be a motivating factor for this governance development process to begin its evolution. As the system was also seeking to expand its operations, the two parties sought to share infrastructure and make better use of the resources available within the region. It was thought that the success experienced in phase I was due to the bilateral relationship that existed. When adding additional partners, the process became increasingly complex and levels of conflict increased.

Phase II continued with the recognition that a formalized governance development process was needed before the network became too large to

[260] Thomas, *The Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*.

manage using informal efforts. Participant A stated that the parties had "to address governance before this goes too far,"[261] meaning the addition of more partner agencies. In addition to better use of resources, an emphasis was put on reducing duplication of effort. Phase II also witnessed the operational environment changing. As major national events began to receive domestic attention and highlight the need for interoperable public safety communications, the parties engaged in phase II sensed pressure to formalize the process and expand their operations.

Despite eventually reaching impasse in phase II, Participant D noted that a solid governance document was produced from this process. He stated, "I think the success was there was a base document that was built, the governance document was built that had all the right elements in there of the major themes and categories."[262] The joint governance document produced in phase II later became the basis for both the RWC and TRWC to use as their foundational governance agreement document. This same document became the starting point for phase III to begin the discussion process.

Phase III continued to be influenced by operational necessity and changing national events. There was also a city manager who became a champion to recognize that the ending to phase II was unacceptable and there should be efforts to reconcile and address comprehensive governance for the region. As Participant D described this individual, "He had the flag that he was carrying that talked about merging the two systems and he was charging up this hill!"[263] The role of a consortium of all Metropolitan Phoenix/Mesa fire departments also became a catalyst to move this process forward in phase III. The fire employee organizations began to ask, "How could you let this

[261] Interview with Participant A, November 17, 2014.

[262] Interview with Participant D, November 24, 2014.

[263] Ibid.

happen?"[264] That put political pressure to also reengage in this process and complete a successful governance development process.

While legal concerns also arose in all phases of this process, phase III was marked by a collaborative process between legal counsels of the parties, who also modified their approach to governance development processes to achieve higher levels of success by using many of the successful strategies the governance working group employed.

### 2. Discussion

The vision of adding more partners and the incentive to receive funding to include additional agencies in the process proved to be a powerful catalyst to move the process from phase I to phase II. Fiscal responsibility and resource utilization also became influential motivators to trigger change. Throughout the analysis, a common theme emerged that two parties were more easily managed than multiple partners. This highlights the complexity that moving from a bilateral relationship poses for the governance development process. The participants agreed that governance was necessary as the system became larger with more partners.

Another pressure point that triggered movement was national and local pressure to establish more effective interoperable communications for public safety personnel. As the public and fire employee organizations put this at the forefront, the pressure also resulted in a need to move the processes forward. A success that emerged from phase I and phase II was the document that was produced. This document became the baseline for the separate cooperatives and even in phase III became the base manuscript that was used to begin discussions. This document proved to be valuable and necessary to get from phase I to phase III. What is unknown is if the process in phase III would have been as successful without the effort of the prior governance development phases.

[264] Interview with Participant D, November 24, 2014.

Finally, many of the participants discussed the need to establish a governance development process before a system is designed, constructed, and put into operation. The establishment of an effective governance process initially establishes the legal structure and defines relationships before funding and territorial issues present themselves.

## G. SUMMARY

Phase I was described by participants as operating extremely successfully, despite the lack of a formalized governance development process. Low conflict and relatively high levels of collaboration marked this phase. During phase I, participants had appropriate operational authority, shared a common mission, and effectively managed conflict with appropriate resolution mechanisms. Phase II experienced a significant amount of competition, territoriality, destructive conflict management processes, and few collaborative efforts. The participants in phase II also lacked strategic vision, focused on differences instead of commonalities, managed negotiation processes with distributive power tactics, were deficient in executive management engagement early in the process, and lacked appropriate experience or knowledge to accomplish the task they were given. This phase ended in a complete breakdown of the process and the establishment of two competitive wireless cooperatives. Phase III was characterized by high levels of cooperation, constructive conflict management processes, and extremely high levels of collaboration. This resulted in a successful governance development process. This phase is culminating in the planned merger of the two separate cooperatives over time.

In phase I, the participants operated successfully in a bilateral relationship with high levels of collaboration. As the process evolved to phase II, when proper techniques were not employed, the process failed. In phase III when participants used established concepts of governance establishment, negotiation, conflict management, and “success” factors for collaboration, successful governance

development processes prevailed. Chapter V will present the conclusions and recommendations derived from these results.

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# V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## A. OVERVIEW

The findings of this comparative case analysis demonstrate the dynamics that may occur in establishing an effective governance development process. As domestic homeland security efforts continue to require multi-jurisdictional and multi-disciplinary approaches to prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery from human-caused and natural disasters, the ability to learn from the experiences of others is critical to future success.

This thesis sought to examine the evolution of the governance development process that spanned three distinct phases and 16 years. The three phases are:

- 1999–2004: Informal Governance Operations (Successful)
- 2004–2008: Formalized Governance Development (Unsuccessful)
- 2008–Current: Formalized Governance Development (Successful)

The comparative case analysis illustrates aspects of both success and failure through the process and generates recommendations that other agencies may employ in their own governance development to accelerate the process or achieve successful outcomes more quickly. Answers to the four research questions are presented, along with recommendations for future endeavors.

## B. WHAT MOTIVATED THE SHIFT FROM AN INFORMAL GOVERNANCE SYSTEM TO A BUREAUCRATIC/INSTITUTIONALIZED GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE?

In the early stages of the partnership between the City of Phoenix and the City of Mesa, the parties operated successfully by establishing a bilateral relationship using informal governance processes. Participants in the early phase of this process were primarily from technical and operational backgrounds with limited policy-making authority. Despite the absence of a formalized governance structure, the two parties provided an exceptional public safety radio network. As issues arose, the two parties were able to successfully address concerns

mutually and reach consensus. As they began to add partners, however, they recognized the need to expand the governance development process to more institutional-level issues and to formalize their relationship.

Even though the partnership was largely informal in phase I, the two parties had a clear delineation of boundaries to include defined operational roles and responsibilities, jurisdictional boundaries, property ownership, frequency ownership, and established reporting structures (authority and control). These two parties also exercised significant control over their individual financial engagement.

In 2005, the City of Tempe received a 2005 COPS Interoperable Communications Technology Grant to join the existing network. The addition of another partner signaled a need to shift from the informal structure to a formalized governance development process. The original two parties understood that once additional jurisdictions were included in the system, critical governance roles, responsibilities, authorities, and procedures would need to be documented and codified. No longer would a simple informal agreement to cooperate adequately address the governance issues required for three or more municipalities to engage in the management of such a complex and costly communications system.

External conditions also motivated a shift to a formalized governance structure. National homeland security efforts continued to focus on multi-jurisdictional and multi-discipline approaches to prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery efforts outlined in the DHS National Preparedness Goal.[265] Additionally, pressure was placed upon entities to resolve differences and collaborate on regional projects across all levels of government relating to homeland security initiatives, such as interoperable communications systems. A

[265] United States Department of Homeland Security, “National Preparedness Goal,” September 2011.

shift in financial conditions due to a recession that began in 2008[266] also necessitated that governmental agencies more effectively collaborate to share resources, eliminate unnecessary redundancy, and reduce operating costs.

The time between phase II and phase III also saw a change in leadership, which motivated a shift in the process. A board of directors for both the RWC and TRWC was established, with city management personnel comprising the membership. These executive-level managers shared a different vision from the earlier phases and triggered movement. The addition of partners to the separated systems also continued to motivate the need for a single and unified governance development process in the region. The persistent external factors applied pressure to institutionalize the governance structure while remaining competitive for additional homeland security funding opportunities and providing better service to the public through enhanced regional homeland security capabilities.

Had the two initial parties remained in a bilateral relationship without the inclusion of additional partners, it is likely that the motivation to shift from an informal governance system to bureaucratic/institutionalized governance may not have occurred, or would not have been necessary until a later time. In addition, if external conditions remained constant, the impetus to engage in the development of a formalized process may have been delayed or not occurred entirely.

## C. WHAT ARE THE ENABLERS AND BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION IN THIS CASE?

Phase I was characterized by the two parties having a "felt need" to collaborate and develop a shared communication system. Although the parties did not initially establish a formal governance development process, they had a common goal and recognized a shared interdependence. The two parties also

[266] Congressional Budget Office, "The Budget and Economic Outlook: Fiscal Years 2009 to 2019," January 2009: 1.

established mechanisms to effectively communicate and share information. Without any competitive rivalries, the cooperative nature of the two parties allowed a strong trusting relationship to develop during this phase. Phase I exhibited many of the enabling or "success" factors in Hocevar, Jansen, and Thomas' ICC Model. These included a "felt need" to collaborate, a common goal, effective communication and information exchange, absence of competitive rivalries, acknowledged benefits of collaboration, trust, commitment and motivation, and technical interoperability. With the exception of a lack of formal roles for managing collaboration, no other "barrier" factors were evident.[267] This phase was successful by all accounts of the participants interviewed.

During phase II, the participants lacked goal clarity and focused on divergent goals. Phase I emphasized operational and technical issues, which were common goals for the parties. As phase II began, the same participants from phase I engaged in the governance development process. Due to the issues shifting from operational and technical to policy making, the participants in phase II had inadequate authority to make binding or authoritative decisions needed to establish an effective governance development process. A lack of formal roles and established procedures for managing the collaborative process created conflict among the participants.

A sense of distrust also emerged as the parties treated each other with suspicion and doubt. Ultimately, participants described this as a competition for resources and an increased sense of territoriality that was detrimental to the governance development process and led to hostility and eventually complete impasse. Phase II was characterized as experiencing little to no collaboration, resulting in a complete failure of the governance development process.

Interview participants stated phase III was successful due to the focus on a common goal and recognized interdependence among the parties engaged in the process. A formalized coordination group was established with sufficient

[267] Hocevar, Jansen, and Thomas, "Building Collaborative Capacity: An Innovative Strategy for Homeland Security Preparedness," 260.

authority to make binding and authoritative decisions on behalf of their respective organizations. The parties involved in phase III also invested heavily in developing social capital and establishing interpersonal networks to effectively communicate and share information. Executive-level leadership supported the governance development process and was committed to achieving success. Absent were the competitive rivalries that existed in phase II. Phase III focused on shared benefits, shared resources, an appreciation of others' perspectives, and a commitment to collaboration. Trust among participants was a factor to achieve commitment and motivation. The trust to share open and honest communications in the negotiation process of governance development led to a greater commitment and motivation to complete the process from the participants. This was not present in phase II.

Each phase of the governance development process in this case exhibits many of the factors affecting interorganizational collaboration detailed in the ICC Model. Phase I and III focused on several "success" factors. There was a "felt need" to collaborate, a common goal and recognized interdependence, sufficient authority of the participants for issues relevant during the phase, effective communication and information exchange, leadership support, acknowledged benefits of collaboration, and trust and commitment.[268] When the parties engaged in phases I and III employed "success" factors, they achieved high levels of collaboration among the participants. In phase II, absent were many of the "success" factors. Instead, the governance development process predominantly exhibited "barrier" factors. These included divergent goals, focus on local organization instead of cross-agency concerns, inadequate authority of participants, lack of formal roles or procedures, inadequate communications, competition for resources, territoriality, and lack of mutual respect.[269] A focus on

[268] Hocevar, Jansen, and Thomas, "Building Collaborative Capacity: An Innovative Strategy for Homeland Security Preparedness," 260.

[269] Ibid.

these “barrier” factors resulted in a lack of collaboration. Ultimately, not only was there a lack of collaboration, but a total collapse of the process.

The findings of the analysis of the three phases demonstrate that a focus on “success” factors leads to enhanced interorganizational collaborative efforts. When a significant number of “barrier” factors are present in governance development processes, the collaboration is negatively affected to a point where continued focus on those factors may ultimately lead to dissolution of any continued collaborative efforts and a failure of the process.

## D. HOW DID THE COLLABORATIVE PROCESS EVOLVE OVER TIME AND WHAT WAS THE IMPACT?

In phase I, the governance development process was informal and followed no established governance structure. The early phases of this effort were characterized by high levels of cooperation and a significant amount of collaboration, compromise, and accommodation. Phase I was also characterized by an entirely operational focus with little focus on strategic or policy-level issues. The parties were satisfied with this bilateral relationship and achieved successful outcomes operating in this mode for approximately 5 years. This was successful due to the wireless network providing public safety personnel with a reliable, interoperable system, which improved operational and response capabilities. Additionally, both parties were satisfied with their level of control and financial commitment to this unified effort and experienced no conflict. The participants made a concerted effort to focus on mutual concerns and maintain positive working relationships in phase I. Issues such as ownership of radio frequencies, property ownership for communications network infrastructure, and the distribution of voting rights (i.e., authority and control) were not concerns for the two parties since they did not present themselves in phase I. The parties were able to resolve issues that did arise informally and one-on-one due to the nature of their relationship at the time.

When movement towards the addition of partners began to occur, the process evolved to one in which a formal effort was initiated to establish and document a governance agreement to accommodate the multitude of partners that were expected to eventually join the network. During phase II, when the two parties began to discuss the issues surrounding frequencies, property ownership, and distribution of voting rights, the effort shifted from collaboration, compromising, and accommodating to an entirely competitive mode. As the conflict reached significant levels, a complete lack of cooperation occurred as both parties withdrew from the situation, leading to impasse in the governance development process.

Despite phase I exhibiting collaborative efforts and phase II exhibiting none, phase III evolved from the prior two efforts to produce a successful process. The knowledge and experience of the prior phases allowed the group in phase III to achieve higher levels of collaboration and success. The process evolved from zero-sum orientations that were present in phase II to win/win outcomes by expanding the range of possible options in the process in phase III. The movement from distributive to integrative bargaining led to extremely high levels of collaboration occurring. Cooperation was high as the parties engaged in phase III focused on the needs of others more so than on their individual or organizational needs to build and maintain mutual relationships. Phase I was successful with collaboration while phase II was absent nearly all collaborative efforts. As the process evolved in phase III, a renewed effort to focus on relationships led to less conflict and greater success at establishing an effective collaborative governance development process.

The evolution of the process had the impact of rebuilding previously damaged relationships and ensuring successful outcomes to the discussions that occurred between the parties. With a shift from competitive processes to those where cooperation was at the forefront, the entire governance process was able to succeed where prior efforts had failed. Additionally, a commitment to work through conflict rather than respond with negative actions also increased trust

and built firm relationships that have been able to withstand conflict and resolve issues constructively to achieve successful outcomes.

## E. HOW CAN FUTURE COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS USE THE CASE FINDINGS TO BUILD GOVERNANCE DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES TO FOSTER SUSTAINMENT AND BUILD FURTHER COLLABORATIVE CAPACITY?

The findings from this comparative case analysis demonstrate the factors that emerge during successful governance development processes. These factors may be used to build further collaborative capacity for future efforts. Efforts to establish effective governance development processes occur in many areas of the homeland security enterprise. While this comparative case analysis focused on interoperable communications systems, recommendations may be applicable across the field and should be considered when establishing collaborative processes.

- Before collaborative efforts begin, ensure that the process is established with a formal coordination committee comprised of individuals of sufficient authority to commit resources, make binding decisions, and develop strategic vision. In addition, ensure representation from relevant technical/operational expertise is available during the process.
- Clearly establish a mission, vision, and guiding principles to allow for the documentation of goals, objectives, and established benefits of collaboration.
- Make use of frameworks such as Imperial's LCAF, Watkins' SSPO, Hocevar, Jansen, and Thomas' ICC Model, the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument, and other models established outside of the homeland security community. These models may provide insight, knowledge, and experience applicable to homeland security efforts to develop collaborative governance development processes to produce quicker results.
- Recognize the governance development process emerges over time. The establishment of interpersonal relationships is necessary to build trust with counterparts and ensure long-term sustainability of the process.
- Ensure the focus is on organizational interests and not individual positions during the negotiation process. This focus on interests will allow for a greater range of possibilities and move towards win/win scenarios to achieve successful outcomes.

- Ensure participants share willingness to compromise and participate with integrative bargaining strategies.
- Develop a mechanism to constructively work through conflict and reach consensus rather than become competitive and issue ultimatums.
- Recognize that the addition of parties will create a more complex governance development process. The addition of partners, however, will allow for more experience, greater insight, and establishment of trust among the participants seeking to institutionalize governance.

## F. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Throughout the course of studying the three distinct phases of the governance development process, several areas for further research presented themselves. The study results begin to answer some of the questions as to how collaborative governance development processes evolve and can be successful. An important opportunity for additional research continues, however. Further study may help supplement the results from this particular comparative analysis and provide greater insight into governance development processes.

(1) Explore the role of triggers and how they impacted each of the phases.

This study briefly captured the motivation that occurred between the phases that caused the governance development process to evolve from phase I to phase III. The role of these triggers is important to understand, as they were the impetus to move from one phase to another. How these triggers affected each phase and the role they played may provide greater understanding of the efforts between the phases.

(2) After the process has been institutionalized for a period, conduct analysis to determine sustainment of the mechanism in place as a result of the governance development process.

Across phase I, II, and III, the process was in a constant state of evolution and change. When the process in phase III is completed and governance institutionalized, an analysis could potentially demonstrate the sustainment of the efforts established in phase III. Imperial's model also documents the operational,

policy, and institutionalization efforts of governance, but does not study the long-term sustainment or implications of the institutionalization process. Further research upon completion of this process would help determine whether these efforts are successful for a short time or if they are able to sustain operations long-term.

(3) If participants in the process change, evaluate how the loss of those relationships impacted the collaborative capacity of the governance structure.

Within each separate phase, the participants remained consistent with no significant departure of individuals during the process. There were changes between the phases, but during each discrete phase the participants remained constant. Efforts to institutionalize governance processes are intended to develop processes that can withstand changes in leadership and personnel. Once governance is completed and a loss of organizational personnel occurs, further study as to the continued collaborative capacity of these processes would provide a better understanding of the role of the individual in the institutionalization process and how the loss may or may not influence the long-term sustainment of such efforts.

(4) Rather than interviewing high-level personnel involved in the process, consider an alternative case study where operational and end users are interviewed for their perspective on the governance development process.

Participants in this study held high-level positions in the governance development process. Their understanding of the process may differ considerably from those in an operational capacity who must employ the policy decisions of these high-level personnel. Consideration should be given to conduct a case study where those operational personnel are interviewed for their perspective on the governance development process. A study to compare perspectives from these individuals may allow further analysis to recognize the efforts occurring in the governance development process at both ends of the organizational structure.

(5) Explore if implementing the recommendations earlier in a similar process produces successful results or expedites the timeline.

If future collaborative governance development processes employ these recommendations earlier in their process, a case study to determine if these efforts produced successful results earlier in the process should be considered. It would appear that employing the recommendations would expedite the success achieved in the process. A case study of a future effort that does employ them, however, would assist with understanding if that is the case or how that affects the timeline, if at all.

(6) Does the evaluation of the phases as described by Imperial need to occur to achieve a fully collaborative state?

Imperial's LCAF alludes to a sequential effort to establish operational procedures, develop policy, and finally institutionalize governance processes. In this case study, that evolution occurred unintentionally but eventually produced similar success to that documented in Imperial's watershed study. An evaluation of additional governance development processes would further document if this evolution of these phases is necessary to achieve a fully collaborative state or if some of them may be consolidated or eliminated to achieve successful outcomes.

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# APPENDIX A. RESEARCH RECRUITMENT LETTER

Greetings,

My name is Jesse Cooper and I am currently a student at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, CA. I am enrolled in the Center for Homeland Defense and Security Master's Program and have begun work on my thesis. My research will focus on the role of governance, negotiation, conflict management, and collaboration. Specifically, the thesis research will examine the role of these subjects as they relate to building collaborative governance systems.

The Phoenix Regional Wireless Cooperative (RWC) and TOPAZ Regional Wireless Cooperative (TRWC) have an extensive history of developing a comprehensive collaborative governance system. As a critical participant in the various stages of this governance process, I request your participation with this research. The purpose of this research will be to assess what concepts of negotiation, conflict management, and collaboration may help identify the challenges and success experienced throughout the process. This research will benefit not only the Phoenix region with future endeavors by understanding the process, but perhaps other regions across the nation facing similar challenges.

This research process will involve a series of one-on-one personal interviews. Questions will be asked to allow participants to provide observations, perspectives, and thoughts regarding the organizational approaches used at various phases of the governance development process. It is anticipated that the interview will last from approximately 60-90 minutes. Secondary interviews will only be needed to clarify information if needed. Participation is voluntary and a consent form will be provided. Information obtained will be kept confidential and analyzed to identify and explore common themes across interviewees. If it is determined that a specific quote from your interview (presented anonymously) would add to the thesis, I will contact you and I can ensure that you are comfortable with the material that will be used before publication.

Participation in this research effort is completely voluntary. If you are interested in participating in this research effort, please contact me at 623.764.5203 or jwcooper@nps.edu. If you have any questions or comments about the research please contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. Susan Hocevar, 831.656.2249, shocevar@nps.edu. Questions about your rights as a research subject or any other concerns may be addressed to the Navy Postgraduate School IRB Chair, Dr. Larry Shattuck, 831-656-2473, lgshattu@nps.edu.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to your feedback.

Jesse Cooper

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# APPENDIX B. NPS CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

## Naval Postgraduate School

## Consent to Participate in Research

**Introduction.** You are invited to participate in a research study entitled "Building a Collaborative Governance System: A Comparative Case Analysis." The purpose of the research is to study the role of negotiation, conflict management, and collaboration as they relate to building collaborative governance systems.

**Procedures.** Participation will involve a one-on-one personal interview. Questions will be asked to allow participants to provide observations, perspectives, and thoughts regarding the process from their perspective as they relate to the various phases of the governance process. It is anticipated that the interview process will last from approximately 60-90 minutes. Secondary interviews will only be needed to clarify information if needed. Approximately 7 participants will take part in this research. Participants will be audio recorded to so that verbatim data will be captured which will be used to identify themes and concepts. Following recording and transcription of audio, the audio recordings will be destroyed as to eliminate any PII associated with the audio.

**Location.** The interview will take place in Phoenix, Arizona. On-site interviews may be held in surrounding suburbs of the Metropolitan Phoenix area to accommodate participants.

**Cost.** There is no cost to participate in this research study.

**Voluntary Nature of the Study**. Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary. If you choose to participate you can change your mind at any time and withdraw from the study. You will not be penalized in any way or lose any benefits to which you would otherwise be entitled if you choose not to participate in this study or to withdraw. The alternative to participating in the research is to not participate in the research.

**Potential Risks and Discomforts.** The potential risks of participating in this study are the possibility of even though all data will be reported anonymously that information in the study may be attributed to the individual by the readers of this report.

**Anticipated Benefits.** Anticipated benefits from this study will be to provide a case study for future organizations to help identify the challenges and success throughout the governance development process in an effort to provide future similar endeavors with information to assist in their own development processes. This research will benefit not only the Phoenix region with future endeavors by understanding the process, but perhaps other regions across the nation facing similar challenges.

**Compensation for Participation.** No tangible compensation will be given.

**Confidentiality & Privacy Act.** Any information that is obtained during this study will be kept confidential to the full extent permitted by law. All efforts, within reason, will be made to keep your personal information in your research record confidential but total confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Interviews will be transcribed and coded to protect the identity of participants. Only

the principal investigator will have access to recordings, transcriptions, and coded data. All information will be stored electronically and encrypted to reduce the risk of breach of confidentiality.

If you consent to be identified by name in this study, any reference to or quote by you will be published in the final research finding only after your review and approval. If you do not agree, then you will be identified broadly by discipline and/or rank, (for example, "fire chief").

☐ I consent to be identified by name in this research study.

☐ I do not consent to be identified by name in this research study.

**Points of Contact**. If you have any questions or comments about the research, or you experience an injury or have questions about any discomforts that you experience while taking part in this study please contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. Susan Hocevar, 831.656.2249, shocevar@nps.edu. Questions about your rights as a research subject or any other concerns may be addressed to the Navy Postgraduate School IRB Chair, Dr. Larry Shattuck, 831-656-2473, lgshattu@nps.edu.

**Statement of Consent**. I have read the information provided above. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and all the questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I have been provided a copy of this form for my records and I agree to participate in this study. I understand that by agreeing to participate in this research and signing this form, I do not waive any of my legal rights.

_____ _____

Participant's Signature Date

_____ _____

Researcher's Signature Date

# APPENDIX C. LETTER TO CITY OF MESA

**City of Phoenix**
OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

September 26, 2007

Ms. Debra Dollar
Assistant City Manager
City of Mesa
P.O. Box 1466
Mesa AZ 85211-1466

RE: Regional Radio System Governance

Dear Ms. Dollar:

It is with reluctance that I must advise you that the city of Phoenix is moving forward with establishing a regional governance system without the city of Mesa. It has become apparent that we have reached an unfortunate impasse on core issues with respect to establishing a regional governing organization for the radio network which we have jointly implemented. Mesa and Phoenix have both invested heavily in establishing this network, but it is now time to move forward with a regional system in which all members have a right to manage, operate, expand and maintain this network, with fairness to all. Unfortunately, Mesa and Phoenix cannot come to an agreement in order to accomplish this.

Since our two portions of the system are currently inextricably linked, and in the interest of interoperability, we will continue to work with the city of Mesa to provide the greatest interoperability between jurisdictions. However, as the regional system moves forward, our two portions of the network will become incompatible. The city of Mesa must plan to separate from the network and become a stand alone system due to this incompatibility. Such separation may require Mesa to procure additional network equipment.

Phoenix and Mesa had the vision to establish a regional radio system in the valley. We have worked together successfully for years, so it is with regret that Phoenix must continue this effort without Mesa.

Sincerely,

Alton J. Washington
Assistant City Manager
City of Phoenix

200 West Washington Street, 12th Floor • Phoenix, Arizona 85003 • 602-262-6941 • FAX: 602-261-8327 • TTY: 602-534-5500

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# APPENDIX D. LETTER FROM CITY OF MESA

COPY

CITY OF MESA
*Great People, Quality Service!*

MIKE –
FYI

**Office of the City Manager**

November 19,2007

Mr. Alton J. Washington
Assistant City Manager
City of Phoenix
200 West Washington Street, 12th Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85003

Dear Mr. Washington:

In follow-up to your letter of September 26 and recent conversations with City of Phoenix staff, the City of Mesa is extremely disappointed that we have not been able to achieve a regional governance agreement for the ongoing operational success of the radio network that both our communities have jointly implemented. After many, many hours of negotiations, Mesa cannot accept the document as it is currently drafted as it does not adequately represent and protect the significant assets both organizations have invested in the system. As you know, the City of Mesa has invested $27 million in infrastructure and $11 million in hardware and as a founding member, Mesa must have additional protections built into the contract agreement. Our two cities have worked together successfully for many years, and we had sincerely hoped that we could memorialize this historic partnership and continue our efforts toward regional interoperability among all Valley cities. Our stated objective for governance continues to be a partnership that supports compatibility and coordination of the radio network while protecting the individual assets of each member.

We regret that Phoenix has decided to move forward without Mesa, but respect your decision to do so. We understand that Mesa would be welcome the join the Phoenix system as a "subscriber" if we chose to do so in the future. The City of Mesa will be moving forward with the TOPAZ regional communications system and is committed to automatic aid and interoperability and will continue to manage the Mesa system to maintain compatibility and the highest level of public safety. We are further committed to continued participation in regional communication meetings and committees regarding network operational issues.

In the interest of both communities, as we contemplate the eventual "unlinking" of our two systems, it is critical that we jointly develop a transition timeline for how and when this would occur. In spite of our inability to reach a governance agreement, I am confident that we will continue to work together in support of our mutual public safety goals.

Sincerely,

Debra Dollar
Assistant City Manager
City of Mesa

20 East Main Street Suite 750
P.O. Box 1466
Mesa Arizona 85211-1466
602.644.3333 Tel
602.644.2175 Fax

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# APPENDIX E. SUMMARY OF THEMES OVER THE THREE PHASES OF GOVERNANCE DEVELOPMENT

| THEME | PHASE I | PHASE II | PHASE III |
|---|---|---|---|
| **GOALS FOR GOVERNANCE DEVELOPMENT** | | | |
| **Governance** | -Operational and technical focus | -Continued operational focus<br>-Some strategic and policy processes employed in a limited capacity | -Policy-making focus<br>-Institutionalization focus |
| **Strategic Vision** | -No vision established<br>-Public safety mission established, but no guiding principles<br>-No concern for strategy or future outcomes | -Limited strategic thinking<br>-No clear vision of desired long-term outcome<br>-No clear direction on what was to be accomplished<br>-Objective based, not vision based<br>-Agency interests first, public safety needs secondary | -Operating at strategic level<br>-Guiding principles established before phase began<br>-Champion needed for cause<br>-Vision established on long-term desired outcomes<br>-Vision to put public safety first, agency interests second |
| **Commonalities** | | -Participants focused on differences<br>-Accepted some commonalities in operational functions, but continued to emphasize differences on structure and policy | -Participants focused on commonalities first, differences later in the process<br>-Common issues identified to focus discussion efforts<br>-Time has been helpful with highlighting commonalities and minimizing differences |

| PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Authority** | -Informal operational authority existed<br>-Limited decision-making authority | -Participants not of appropriate authority to make binding decisions<br>-Policy makers engaged too late in the process<br>-Once policy makers involved, poor decisions made based on limited information | -High-level executive participants engaged at the beginning of the process<br>-Operational personnel engaged as needed for specific discussions only<br>-Executive leadership set the tone for the process |
| **Experience/ Knowledge/ Learning** | -Participants from primarily technical and operational background with limited policy-making experience or knowledge | -Continued involvement by those with limited experience and knowledge<br>-Learning was occurring during the process | -Historical knowledge of prior phases was helpful in developing a plan for moving forward and learning from past mistakes<br>-Having knowledgeable, trained, and experienced personnel allowed the process to be successful<br>-Knowledge leads to increased trust with counterparts |

| ORGANIZATIONAL COLLABORATIVE CAPACITY | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Collaborative Capacity** | -Felt need to collaborate and realizing value in doing things together and ability to accomplish more<br><br>-No formalized structure in place | -Lack of formal roles or procedures for managing collaboration<br><br>-Group size was too large to be effective<br><br>-Competition for resources or territory<br><br>-Individuals had a vested interest in process/outcome, which contributed to breakdown | -Commitment of organizations and leadership to achieve successful outcomes<br><br>-Focus on incremental successes rather than a single effort to achieve success<br><br>-Formalized coordination and defined roles<br><br>-Agencies invested in the process and effective exchange of ideas and information<br><br>-Appreciation for others' views and perspectives<br><br>-Commitment to seeing the process through to completion regardless of conflict or issues that arose |

| PROCESSES | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Negotiation** | -Lack of trust between entities<br>-Bilateral relationship important | -Formalization process and resulting negotiation caused eventual impasse<br>-Failed negotiation led to ultimatum being issued and resulting impasse<br>-Zero sum process<br>-Focus on positions and not interests<br>-Distributive bargaining | -Trust built on mutual respect<br>-Continuity of negotiating team critical to success and building trust<br>-Focus on future and do not dwell on past failures<br>-Focus on interests and not positions<br>-Win/Win outcomes sought<br>-Willingness to compromise<br>-Integrative bargaining |
| **Conflict** | -Cooperativeness was high<br>-Collaboration was occurring<br>-Accommodation was high | -Ultimatum issued that was not able to be resolved<br>-Parties did not work through conflict<br>-Unwillingness to compromise<br>-Competition was high<br>-Avoiding issues occurred, which prohibited them from being effectively addressed | -Highly cooperative process<br>-Parties worked through conflict to reach resolution<br>-Willingness to compromise on issues<br>-Accommodation was high<br>-Consensus-building efforts were high<br>-Collaboration was high<br>-Control relinquished |

| MISCELLANEOUS | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Miscellaneous** | -Success was easier to obtain with only two partners engaged | -Governance was required before the system became too large and unmanageable<br>-Operational environment was changing, which necessitated change<br>-Solid governance document emerged to become basis for later phase from the process despite reaching an impasse | -Operational needs were driving factors for policy makers to continue with governance development process<br>-Develop governance process first before a system becomes operational |

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